DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 366 531 SO 023 681

TITLE	The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking for a Lasting Peace. Alternatives for Public Debate and Policy Development. Choices for the 21st Centruy. Revised.
INSTITUTION	Brown Univ., Providence, RI. Center for Foreign Policy Development.
SPONS AGENCY	Pew Charitable Trusts, Philadelphia, PA.
PUB DATE	Aug 93
NOTE	65p.; Updates ED 354 178.
AVAILABLE FROM	Choices Education Project, Center for Foreign Policy Development, Brown University, Box 1948, Providence, RI 02912 ($8).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Instructional Materials (For Learner) (051)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Area Studies; *Conflict Resolution; Controversial Issues (Course Content); Discussion (Teaching Technique); Foreign Countries; Foreign Policy; Futures (of Society); Higher Education; *International Relations; Middle Eastern Studies; Peace; *Policy Formation; *Problem Solving; *Public Policy; Secondary Education; War
IDENTIFIERS	*Arab States; *Israel

ABSTRACT

This document is part of a series that seeks to help people think constructively about foreign policy issues, to improve citizen involvement, and to encourage debate on public issues. "The Arab-Israeli Conflict from 1920 to 1985"; "A Crossroads in the Middle East"; and "U.S. Thinking and the Politics of Peace" are the issues for discussion. Options that the document suggests for debate appear under the headings "Back Israeli Claims"; "Support a Palestinian State"; "Encourage Compromise"; "Withdraw from the Region"; and "Pass the Baton to the UN." The document includes a note to teachers, a lesson plan and student activities, and abridged background readings. (SG)

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CHOICES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking For A Lasting Peace

SP 023 681

ALTERNATIVES FOR PUBLIC DEBATE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

A project of the Center for Foreign Policy Development

Brown University, Box 1948, Providence, RI 02912

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THE CHOICES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY EDUCATION PROJECT was established at the Center for Foreign Policy Development to help citizens think constructively about foreign policy issues, to improve participatory citizenship skills, and to encourage public judgment on policy priorities.

THE CENTER FOR FOREIGN POLICY DEVELOPMENT of the Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies at Brown University is a non-profit research organization. Its mandate is to bring together scholars, policymakers, and the public in a search for policy choices that can lead to a consensus on U.S. national security and foreign policy.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking for a Lasting Peace was developed by the Choices for the 21st Century Education Project with the assistance of the research staff at the Watson Institute's Center for Foreign Policy Development and several other experts in the field. We wish to thank the following for their invaluable input.

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To Mary Lhowe and Lorraine Walsh, editorial associates at the Center for Foreign Policy Development, we extend our appreciation for editing this unit. We also thank Ashley Tucker and Joe Walsh for their contributions to earlier editions of this unit.

Special thanks also to three high school teachers who tested drafts of this material in their classrooms prior to publication: Don Bakker of North Eastham, Massachusetts; Mary Jane McKay of Richmond, Virginia; and Paula Titon of Cranston, Rhode Island.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking for a Lasting Peace is part of a continuing series on current foreign policy issues. A new unit is published every three months during the academic year. We are grateful to The Pew Charitable Trusts, for without their financial support the series would not have come to fruition.

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for the 21st Century Education Project

August 1993

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The Choices for the 21st Century Education Project develops curricula for high schools and colleges on current foreign policy issues and offers workshops, institutes, and in-service programs for high school teachers. Course materials place special emphasis on the importance of educating students in their participatory role as citizens.

The Choices for the 21st Century Education Project is a project of the **Center for Foreign Policy Development** of the Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies at Brown University.

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Note to Teachers

Teaching about the Arab-Israeli conflict presents educators with a number of difficulties. Until recently, intransigence on both sides of the dispute left little hope for conciliation. Debate on the subject in the international arena has generally been acrimonious and divisive. Moreover, historical background on the conflict is not only demanding and complex, but is often muddled by contradictory interpretations.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking for a Lasting Peace attempts to resolve these problems for the classroom teacher at a time when momentous international events, such as the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Persian Gulf War, and the Arab-Israeli peace talks, have afforded new opportunities to take a fresh look at the Middle East. The unit seeks to go beyond the two-dimensional confrontation that has traditionally shaped discussion of the Arab-Israel conflict. Rather, the core of the unit revolves around five distinct options that allow students to explore a range of alternatives for U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. The framework of options provides students with a context for integrating and analyzing newly acquired information. The background readings are likewise designed with the high school student in mind. The four sections offer students accessible portions of relevant, applicable material.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking for a Lasting Peace includes a ten-day and a five-day lesson plan. Both plans follow a similar sequence, first introducing the historical background of the conflict and presenting Arab and Israeli perspectives, then engaging students in a role play of U.S. options, and finally guiding them toward the development of their own ideas about U.S. policy. The full-length background readings are intended for use with the ten-day lesson plan, while an abridged version of the readings is available for the five-day plan.

Below is an outline of the "Ten-Day Lesson Plan" found on pages 33-36. You may also find the "Five-Day Lesson Plan" on pages 47-49 useful. The "Student Text" (pages 1-32) contains the background readings and the five options. Student handouts follow the lesson plan. The lesson plan offered in this unit is a guide. Many teachers choose to devote additional time to certain activities. We hope that these suggestions help you in tailoring the unit to fit the needs of your classroom.

Day One: Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict: preparation
Homework: Read the "Introduction" of the background readings

Day Two: Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict: presentation
Homework: Read Part I of the background readings and complete "Study Guide – Part I"

Day Three: Mapping the Arab-Israeli conflict
Homework: Read Part II of the background readings and complete "Study Guide – Part II"

Day Four: Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective: preparation

Day Five: Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective: presentation
Homework: Read Part III of the background readings and complete "Study Guide – Part III"

Day Six: Advocating the five options: organization and preparation
Homework: Complete preparations for the simulation

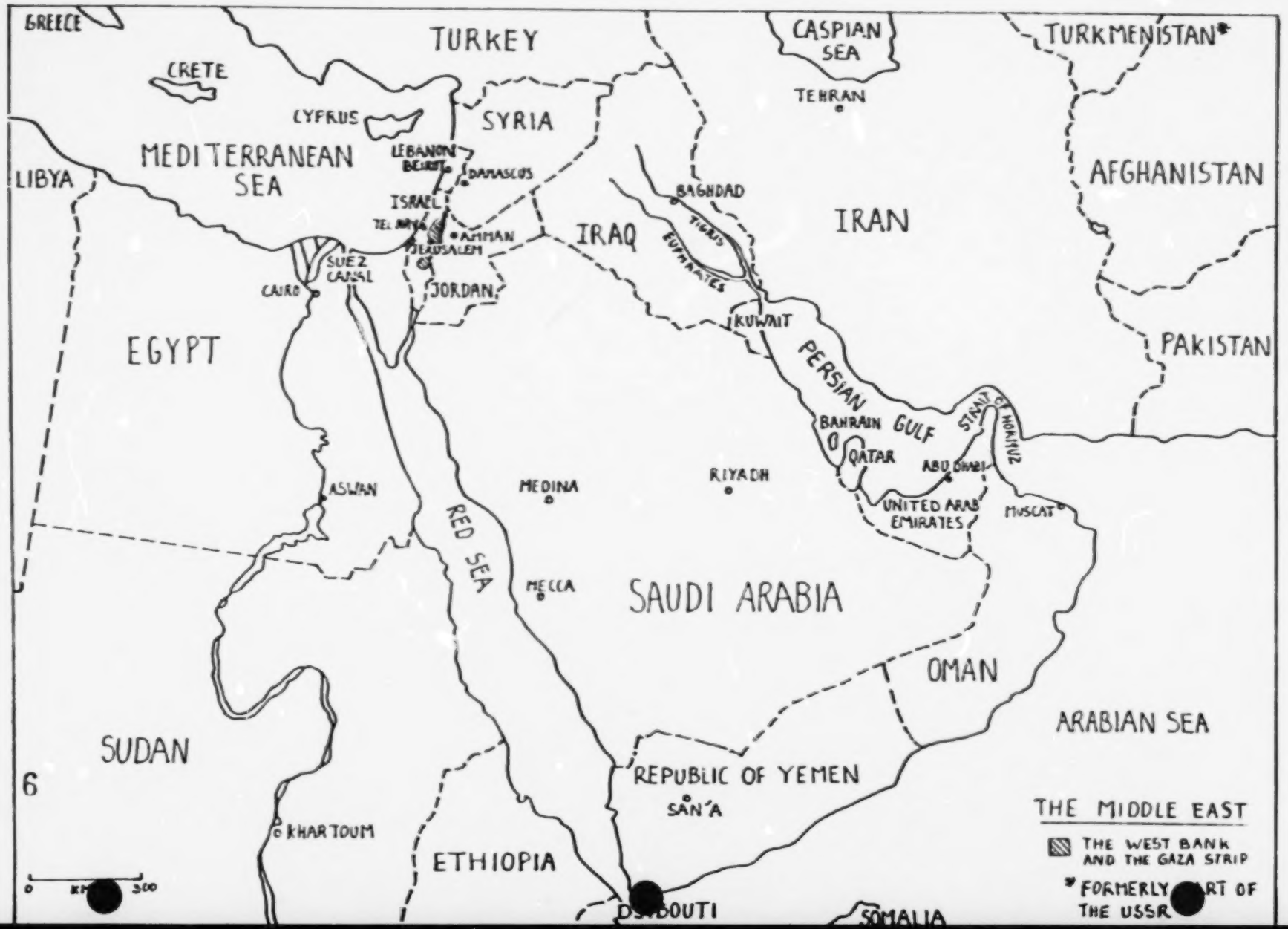
Day Seven: Advocating the five options: presentation
Homework: Complete preparations for cross-examination questions

Day Eight: Advocating the five options: cross-examination
Homework: Read each of the five options and complete "Focusing Your Thoughts"

Day Nine: Crafting student options

Day Ten: Expressing your views

Data Compiled from: Carter, Jimmy The Blood of Abraham Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1985, map 1.



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Introduction

The Arab-Israeli conflict centers on a small piece of land in the Middle East no larger than the state of New Jersey. This area, which stretches from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, is referred to either by its Latin name of Palestine, or the Hebrew name of *Eretz Israel*.* Both Arabs and Jews have religious ties to this land and therefore an understanding of these ties is important to comprehend the modern conflict. However, the current conflict is not primarily a religious battle, but a political battle over competing national aspirations. In other words, it is a fight over who will control Palestine and who will call it their home.

Religious ties to the land of Palestine

Three of the world's great religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – developed in the Middle East. Each of these religions is monotheistic, meaning that followers believe in only one god. Believers in all three religions claim descent from the Hebrew patriarch Abraham and all have special ties to Palestine.

Jewish ties to the land: According to Jewish sacred writings, Palestine was promised to the Jewish people by God in a covenant with Abraham and later with Moses. Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son to prove his obedience to God. The attempted sacrifice is believed to have taken place on Mount Zion, in Jerusalem, the location on which the first and second Jewish Temples were later built and the holiest site for the Jewish people.

A dynasty of Jewish kings ruled parts of Palestine in ancient times, but its reign was repeatedly interrupted by invasion from other powers. The kingdom was conquered by the Babylonians in the 6th century B.C., and its people were held captive in Babylon for many years. Nevertheless, many Jews eventually returned to Palestine, and rebuilt their homes and their Temple. The Jewish nation continued to inhabit the region, even after the Romans imposed their rule in 63 B.C. But after a series of revolts, the Roman emperor expelled many Jews from Palestine, and they were dispersed throughout the empire. The Jews who were forced to live outside of Palestine came to be called Diaspora Jews, or "those in dispersion." They eventually made their homes throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Over thousands of years of Jewish history, periods of acceptance and prosperity alternated with waves of persecution, massacre and flight. Under the impact of these upheavals, some Jews forgot their past and were assimilated into other cultures. Many others responded in the opposite way – by strengthening their commitment to Jewish tradition and looking forward to the day when God would send a savior to lead the Jews back to Zion. Their religion became so closely tied with their daily lives that a communal identity has survived to the present.

Christian ties to the land: Palestine is the "Holy Land" to the world's Christians because it is the birthplace of Jesus, a Jew, and the setting for the story of his life and lessons as recounted in the New Testament of the Bible. Many Arabs today are Christians and trace their faith to the early followers of Christ.

Muslim ties to the land: Muslims believe that God revealed his truths through a series of prophets: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus, and finally Muhammad, who is the last of the prophets. For Muslims, therefore, some of the scriptural heritage of the Jews and the Christians is their heritage as well. However, Muslims are guided by their own holy scripture, the Koran, which is the word of God as revealed to Muhammad. The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, according to tradition, marks the site of Abraham's attempted sacrifice. It is also believed to be the place where Muhammad touched earth during a miraculous journey to heaven. Muslims consider Jerusalem their third holiest city and, therefore, an important pilgrimage site.

Religious beliefs still carry great weight in the Middle East, making it difficult for some who value

*Palestine literally means "land of the Philistines" in Latin, the name given by the Roman Empire. "Eretz Israel" is Hebrew for "land of Israel." This unit will use the name Palestine, the name most historians use, when referring to the area before 1948.

these ties to compromise over their claims to the land. Religious ties, however, are not the driving factor in the conflict today. The conflict is over land. For Palestinian Arabs, including both Christians and Muslims, ties are based on the fact that for centuries Palestine has been their home. For Jews, the compelling interest has been to establish a homeland, safe from persecution, in the land of their ancestors. The rise of nationalism in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the repercussions it had on both Jews and Arabs, marked the beginning of the present dispute.

The Rise of Nationalism

Until about a hundred years ago, most of the world was governed by multinational empires. The Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, for instance, ruled large parts of Europe, while the Ottoman Turkish Empire ruled much of the Middle East, including Palestine. Each empire contained many "nations," or peoples of common descent, religion, language and culture. People throughout an empire were generally loyal to their emperor, even if he came from a different nation.

In the 19th century, however, this attitude changed. According to the idea of modern nationalism that first arose in Europe, each nation should strive to free itself from multinational empires and create a national state of its own.

At the turn of the century, neither Jews nor Palestinian Arabs had a state of their own. Since 1517, Palestine, which was populated mostly by Arabs, had been ruled by the Ottoman Empire. Diaspora Jews had scattered around the world but most had not assimilated into the societies in which they lived. In the 19th century, many Jews were inspired by successful examples of nationalism and began considering the possibility of creating their own state. They were also driven by a mounting wave of hatred, or anti-semitism, toward Jews in Europe.

At the turn of the century, Theodore Herzl, a European Jew, founded the World Zionist Organization, which promoted the establishment of an independent Jewish state. This state, Herzl and other Zionists hoped, would reunite the Jews, protect them from persecution, and establish a government that would serve their needs.

In the beginning, the organization courted various European governments to grant them territory. One location considered was in British East Africa (present-day Kenya and Uganda). Within a few years, however, the Zionist movement came to be dominated by a group which, for religious reasons, focused its attention on Palestine. The Zionists petitioned the Ottomans for the creation of an independent state within the empire, but the Ottomans declined. Refusing to be discouraged, Zionists bought land from local landowners in Palestine, so that Jewish immigrants could settle there.

The World Zionist Organization was instrumental in turning the Jewish dream of a nation into a reality. It created a financial and organizational network that actively pursued this end, and that could take charge once a nation was created. Because of this, the Jews were better prepared than the Palestinian Arabs to build their own state.

Although nationalism at this time was largely a European development, British and French links to the Middle East brought an awareness of this movement to the Arab world. Arab nationalism began to emerge at the end of the 19th century. At first, this was an intellectual movement that promoted the resurgence of a common Arab culture and language. Only later, as Arab nationalism started to win popular support and as the Ottoman hold on the region weakened, did the prospect emerge of creating independent Arab states. The Arab nationalists worked to hasten the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and hoped that they would then be able to rule themselves.

As the 19th century came to a close, the movement to establish a Jewish national home in the Middle East increased in popularity among European Jews. As Jewish immigration increased, Arab opposition developed. Even though there were only 85,000 Jews in Palestine in 1914 — compared to about 550,000 Arabs — many Arabs felt threatened by the immigration of Jews to Palestine and the increasing international support that the Jewish cause was receiving.

The role of European powers in Palestine

Arabs and Jews were not the only ones with a stake in the future of the region. During the 19th century, Britain, France, and Russia had taken advantage of the Ottoman Empire's weakness to establish their influence in the region. Britain was especially involved, since it controlled the Suez Canal in Egypt, which gave it easy access to its empire in the Indian subcontinent.

When World War I erupted, the Ottoman Empire threatened British and French interests in the region by siding with the enemy, Germany. Britain decided to take active steps to protect its sphere of influence and entered into three separate negotiations. The present Arab-Israeli conflict stems, in part, from these conflicting plans:

- The British promised the Arabs independence after the war if they staged a revolt against the Ottoman Turks. With the help of the now legendary British officer T. E. Lawrence, or Lawrence of Arabia, Arab armies rose against the Turks, capturing several garrisons and harassing Turkish forces.
- The British also signed a secret agreement with France dividing control of the region between the two countries. The British retained influence over the areas in which they had the greatest interest, Iraq and Transjordan (present-day Jordan). According to this pact, the area of Palestine was to be under international administration.
- In the "Balfour Declaration," a letter written by British foreign minister Arthur Balfour, the British promised the Zionists "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people...it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine."

The British hoped these agreements would strengthen their position in the region. Confusion and conflict, however, followed the end of the war and the collapse of Turkish influence in the area, especially after Britain's three contradictory promises were made public. Arabs and Jews both looked to the British to keep to their word.

In an effort to resolve the situation in the early 1920s, the League of Nations set up a system of mandates, whereby lands taken from the Ottoman Empire were put under the administrative control of France and Britain. France was given control of Syria and Lebanon. Britain was given a mandate for Iraq, and a mandate for Palestine and Transjordan as well.

By 1920, there were already several changes under way in the region that had dimmed the possibility of peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews in Palestine.

The British partitioned the land of the mandate of Palestine ("greater Palestine," including Palestine and Transjordan) almost as soon as they were granted control. The area east of the Jordan River, Transjordan, was given to the Hashemites, an Arab royal family from Mecca that had helped Britain in the war. Leaders in Transjordan began the process of establishing an independent state, and eventually named their country Jordan. Jewish migration east of the Jordan River was barred after Transjordan was created. This partition left the British with only the land west of the Jordan River, Palestine, to administer directly after 1921.

The League of Nations required Britain to honor the Balfour Declaration in the mandate of Palestine. Accordingly, the British were to promote the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" without infringing on the rights of the local Arab population.

Zionists and Arab nationalists interpreted this differently. The Zionists believed the Balfour Declaration promised the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. In order for this to be achieved quickly, the immigration of Jews had to be encouraged so that the future state could be populated by Jews. Arab nationalists, on the other hand, believed that they would be granted independence and wanted restrictions on Jewish immigration in order to protect their majority.

The steady increase in Jewish immigration in the 1920s fueled tensions which resulted in clashes between Zionists and Arab nationalists. In response to these violent outbreaks, the Zionist settlers organized the Haganah, a local defense force that grew during the 1920s.

When Adolf Hitler took power in Germany in 1933, the immigration rate of Jews to Palestine shot up, leading to even more tension between Arabs and Jews. The Arab leadership in Palestine did not believe that the British were doing enough to slow Jewish immigration. In 1936, Arabs launched a general strike in protest of British policy. They also boycotted Jewish businesses and began attacks against Jews and Jewish settlements, as well as British forces. The strike was the beginning of three years of strife that came to be known as the Arab Revolt.

The Arab Revolt convinced the British government that the national aspirations of the two groups were irreconcilable within a unified state of Palestine. In 1937, the British suggested a partition of Palestine, dividing it into separate Arab and Jewish zones (see map 1). Both Arabs and Jews were opposed to the partition, because both claimed the right to the whole of Palestine. But the Zionist leadership decided that a guarantee to part of Palestine was better than nothing. Even the Zionists who did not want to compromise accepted the partition as the only way to establish a Jewish state quickly. Arab leaders, on the other hand, vowed to fight the partition. The Arabs were the majority in Palestine and did not want it divided. They regarded the Jews as new settlers, whereas Palestine was their home and the home of their fathers and forefathers.

The partition plan led to a much more violent stage of the Arab Revolt in 1937. By the time the revolt ended in 1939, 69 British soldiers, 500 Jews and more than 3,000 Arabs had been killed. Arab nationalists had attacked not just Jews and British officials, but also Arabs who cooperated with the British. As the violence grew, the Haganah worked cooperatively with the British military. More extreme Zionist groups, like the Stern Gang and the Irgun, also developed during this time and carried out attacks against Arabs. The revolt ended when the Arab leadership collapsed. By that time, World War II had broken out in Europe, preventing the British from giving further consideration to the partition plan.

World War II dramatically changed the situation in the Middle East. As the war began, the British government adopted a pro-Arab stance. In order to line up Arab support in the effort against Hitler, the British restricted Jewish immigration. But as the war ended, many countries began to look favorably on the

Jewish position. This support was in large part a response to the Holocaust during World War II, when more than 6 million European Jews were murdered under the Nazi regime.

The Holocaust confirmed to many Jews what the earliest Zionists had argued: that Jews were not safe unless they had a state of their own. Many of the Jews who survived the Nazi death camps left Europe after the war. Large numbers of Jews emigrated to the United States, but Jewish support for Zionism had greatly increased, and hundreds of thousands of Jews emigrated to Palestine. In 1917, Jews in Palestine were 8 percent of the population, but after World War II, the number swelled to 600,000, or 30 percent of the population. The Arab population at this time was approximately 1,256,000.

The restriction in immigration at the outbreak of the war convinced the Zionists that the British had abandoned their responsibilities under the League of Nations mandate and were instead more interested in their relations with the Arabs. Zionist Jews were in Palestine in much larger numbers now, and the local governments and defense forces they had assembled since the 1920s were very well organized. They demanded that the British leave Palestine. Some Zionist guerrilla groups carried out attacks against the British to force them to leave.

In 1947, facing opposition from both the Arab nationalists and the Zionists, the British decided to pull out of Palestine within a year. The League of Nations was no longer in existence, so the British decided to turn responsibility for Palestine over to the newly formed United Nations (UN), officially ending the mandate at midnight, May 14, 1948.

The creation of Israel

The United Nations came to the same conclusion that the British had come to before World War II: that Palestine would have to be divided. The UN proposed a new partition plan, dividing the region into two unequal states, one Jewish and one Arab (see map 2). One city in the Jewish zone was to be under Arab rule. Meanwhile, Jerusalem, which fell within the proposed Arab zone, was to become an international city, under the supervision of the UN. Zionists accepted the UN partition plan for the same reason that they had accepted the 1937 British partition plan. The Arabs, as in 1937, did not.

Knowing the British would pull their troops out the day the partition went into effect, Zionists began to take control of the territory allotted to them by the UN, including many predominantly Arab towns that had been included in the Jewish zone. As the date of the British departure approached, violence erupted as each side fought to extend its area of control.

This outbreak of violence was intense, and there were terrorist acts on both sides. Many Arabs fled in panic. It is estimated that more than half a million, or approximately 70 percent of the Arabs who lived in the Jewish area, left for the Arab zone or other Arab countries.

When the British left in May 1948, the Zionists declared that the part of Palestine given them by the United Nations was the independent state of Israel. The United States and the Soviet Union immediately granted diplomatic recognition to the new state. The Arab states, however, refused to recognize Israel. For some time, Palestinian Arabs had been supported in their fight by men and arms from neighboring Arab countries, but the day after it declared itself an independent state, Israel was invaded by forces from Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq.

The 1948 war ended with a UN-negotiated cease-fire a few months later. Israel had held off the Arab attack and expanded its territory to include a part of the Arab zone of the UN partition. The rest of the Arab zone was divided between Jordan, which held the land on the western bank of the Jordan River (present-day West Bank), and Egypt, which held the Gaza Strip (see map 3). Jerusalem became a divided city, with the western half under Israel's control and the eastern half under Jordan's control. These cease-fire lines served as the de facto boundaries of the states in the region, but were not official borders. The Arab states refused to formally recognize Israel's existence, or negotiate directly with its leaders. The end of the war also saw the creation of a huge refugee problem, as Palestinian Arabs who had fled from Israel were not allowed back to their homes. Jewish settlers moved into the region

and filled their places. Those Palestinians who remained in Israel were denied full citizenship.

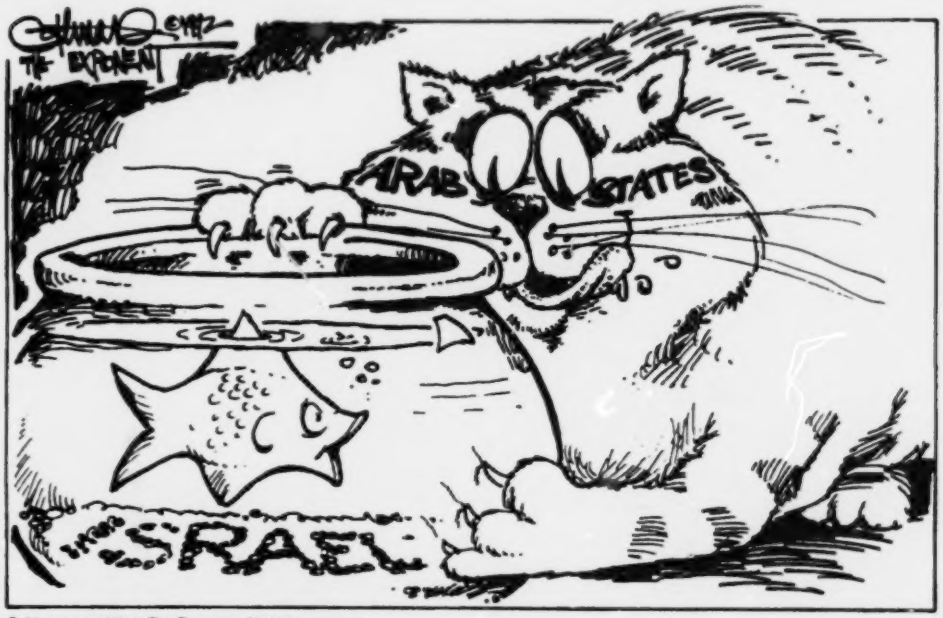
The creation of the state of Israel was the crowning achievement of the Zionist movement. By gaining their own state, Jews felt they could better protect themselves against hostility and persecution in the future. However, the fulfillment of Jewish nationalism set back the hopes of Palestinian Arabs for their own state. Palestinians felt the land was rightfully theirs, and would not accept the creation of a state of Israel. Moreover, leaders in neighboring Arab countries were willing to back up Palestinian claims with military aid. The Israelis resolved to fight rather than lose their new homeland. Thus the stage was set for increased conflict over the next four decades.

The early years of Israel

During the 1950s there were three major developments. The first was the rise of Pan-Arabism, a movement led by Egyptian leader Gamal Abd al-Nasser, which called for Arab unity and rejected the interference of Western powers in the affairs of the Middle East. Opposition to Israel became one of the rallying points of Pan-Arabism.

The second was the end of British and French pre-eminence in the Middle East. In 1956, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, ending 81 years of British control, and declared it Egyptian property. The British and French launched a military operation to retake the canal. This operation, with the help of Israel, succeeded militarily but failed politically. The United States and the Soviet Union condemned the attack and demanded that all three armies withdraw from Egypt. UN peacekeeping forces were positioned along the Israeli-Egyptian border to prevent further aggression. The Suez Crisis demonstrated the decline of French and British influence in the region.

The third development was a change in the U.S. attitude toward the Middle East. The United States was instrumental in establishing the state of Israel, but otherwise had not been involved in Middle Eastern affairs. During the 1950s, however, the Cold War against the Soviet Union intensified and Washington saw the Middle East as a battleground in the global fight to contain communism. Furthermore, the United States and its allies increasingly depended on Middle Eastern oil, adding a new dimension to U.S. interests in the region. After 1957, the United States provided economic and military aid to any state in the region that would vow to oppose communism and help guarantee foreign access to oil. Egypt was an early recipient of U.S. aid, which was later cut off when Nasser officially recognized communist China. Israel, Saudi Arabia and Iran all received substantial U.S. support.



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In the Middle East itself, there was a major change by the mid-1960s. The Arabs who had been displaced by the 1948 war demanded that they be allowed to return to their homeland, and that Palestine become an Arab state. The Arab League, an association of Arab countries founded in 1945, decided at a

meeting in 1964 to create the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The PLO's goal was "liberating Palestine" and recapturing its "usurped homeland in its entirety." At about the same time, the Soviet Union became a primary supplier of arms to the Arabs, particularly Egypt, Iraq, and Syria.

The Six-Day War of 1967

In 1967, the Arab states and Israel fought again. This war, called the Six-Day War, was a major turning point in the conflict and changed the political map of the region. The Israelis gained territories they deemed vital to their security, and Palestinians living there came under Israeli military rule.

In the months before the fighting, Arab states prepared for war and made threats against Israel, but refrained from direct military attack. Egypt cut off the Gulf of Aqaba to Israel's ships. Nasser also demanded that the UN remove a peacekeeping force in the Sinai Peninsula, which had been acting as a buffer between Egypt and Israel since the Suez Crisis.

The Israeli government considered these moves acts of war. The Israelis also decided that they could win a swift victory if they undertook a surprise attack. As a result, Israel launched a strike against its Arab neighbors. Within a few hours, Israel had destroyed much of the air forces of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, and within six days captured the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights — all of which had been used by the Arab states to launch attacks into Israel (see map 4). Israel also captured East Jerusalem, which had been under Jordan's control since the 1948 war, and reunited the city under Israeli control. The West Bank and Gaza Strip became known as the occupied territories, and Palestinians living there came under military rule, a state of affairs that continues today.

President Lyndon Johnson thought Israel should hold onto the territory it had captured until the Arab states were willing to make peace with Israel. Johnson increased U.S. support for Israel, making the United States the largest supplier of military equipment to Israel. For the next two decades, every U.S. president supported Israel, and refused to pressure it to return the captured territories until Israel's neighbors formally recognized the country.

After the 1967 Six-Day War, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 242, which called on the Arabs to stop all threats and acts of force against Israel, and for "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict." This is the origin of the now familiar formula of trading "land for peace" to settle the conflict. The Middle Eastern states did not, however, implement this resolution, because neither side could agree on its exact meaning.

An additional result of the 1967 war was the emergence of the PLO as an independent advocate of Palestinian concerns, separate from the control of the Arab League. The PLO is composed of several organizations, ranging from political bodies to guerrilla groups. After the Six-Day War, one guerrilla group, al-Fatah, took control of the PLO, and Yasser Arafat, who headed al-Fatah, became its chairman.

Changes in the 1970s

The 1970s was a decade of extremes in the Middle East. Violence and war marked the beginning of the decade, but, by the end, the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab nation had been signed.

Armed guerrilla attacks became a tool used to draw attention to the plight of the Palestinians. There were several Arab attacks against Israeli civilians in the 1970s. Perhaps the best-known incident was at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich, Germany, where eleven Israeli athletes were taken hostage by a group of Arab radicals. The athletes were killed during a rescue attempt. Israel also launched several attacks. This marked the beginning of a spiral of aggression and counter-aggression. In Israel, these acts of violence created increasing support for the policies of the hardline political parties.

In 1973, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel on Yom Kippur, a Jewish holy day, in an effort to retake the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights. The effort ultimately failed, but fighting was fierce and at first the Arab armies had the upper hand. During the first few days of the war, many Israelis

feared that their army might lose. Some observers in the United States now believe that Israel considered using nuclear weapons.

Just as the Soviet Union rapidly resupplied Syria and Egypt during the war, the United States sent large shipments of arms to Israel. This prompted the Arab states to impose an oil embargo against the United States. The embargo had a crippling effect on the United States, forcing oil prices to quadruple and causing long lines at gas stations. In recognition of the impact of the oil embargo, U.S. presidents since 1973 have stated that the Middle Eastern oil supply is of vital national interest, and the United States has pledged to use military means to protect that interest.

The 1973 war gave diplomacy a fresh chance. The Arab states had been embarrassed by their defeat in the 1967 war. Although they lost in 1973, the Arab armies fought more effectively than in 1967 and were initially able to break through the Israeli defense lines. Following this, the new leader of Egypt, Anwar Sadat, pursued peace talks with the Israelis. The war also convinced the U.S. government that, although it still supported Israel, the United States had to try to find a negotiated settlement.

The United States became involved in the negotiating process when Secretary of State Henry Kissinger shuttled between the capitals of the Middle East to reach a cease-fire among the warring countries. Kissinger's diplomatic efforts also resulted in an easing of tensions between Israel and Egypt. But several events thwarted further diplomacy. In the United States, most Americans were more interested in the new detente with the Soviet Union and the resignation of President Richard Nixon than with peace in the Middle East. At the same time in the Middle East, there was a new hard-line attitude in the Arab world, which came about in reaction to Sadat's willingness to negotiate with Israel. Many Arab states, including Syria and Iraq, as well as the PLO, opposed further diplomatic efforts. Consequently, Kissinger's diplomatic efforts effectively ended in 1975.

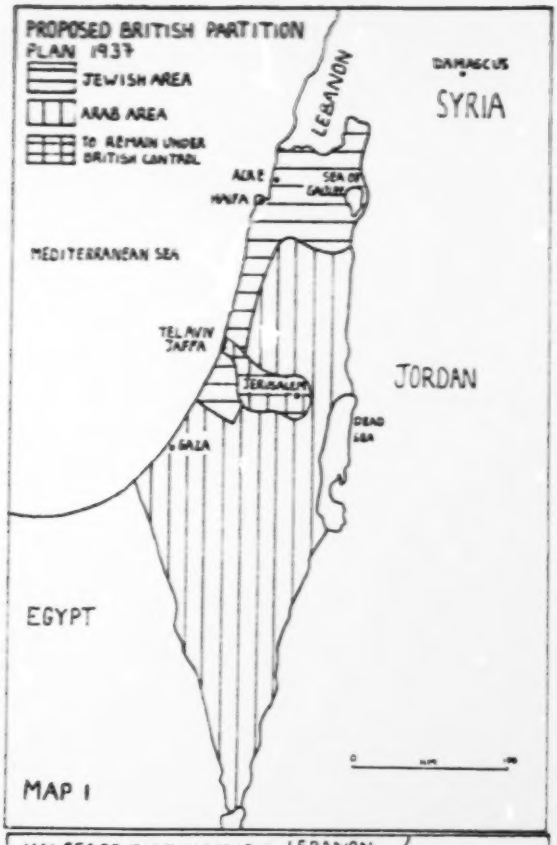
In 1977, Sadat took a dramatic step to move the stalled peace effort forward. He traveled to Jerusalem and addressed the Knesset, Israel's parliament. His speech, which was a direct appeal to end the conflict made in the capital city of the enemy, was the first and only gesture of its kind in the Middle East.

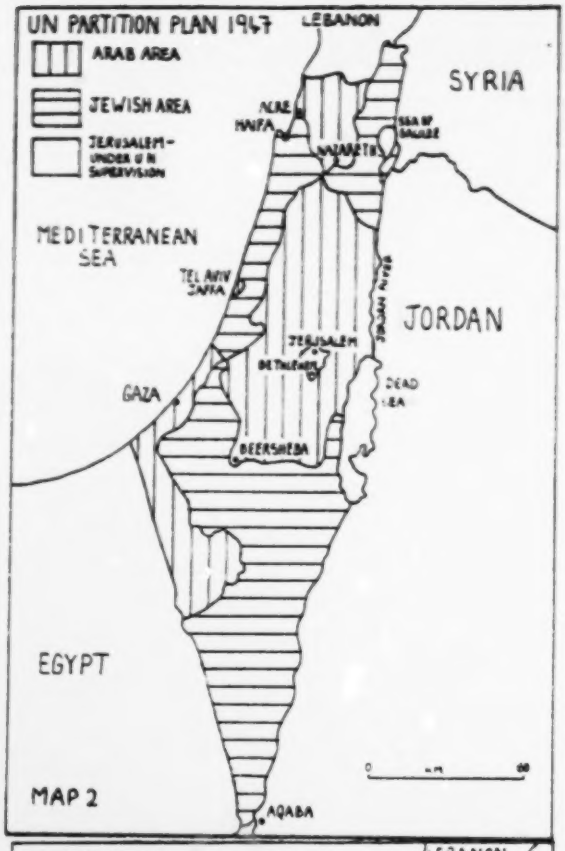
But Sadat's initiative in itself did not bring peace. Earlier that same year, Israel had elected a right-wing government, led by the Likud party of Menachem Begin. During the election campaign, Begin had promised never to trade land for peace. His government launched a controversial policy of building Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. Both of these stances made it difficult to imagine a solution that Egyptians and Israelis would accept.

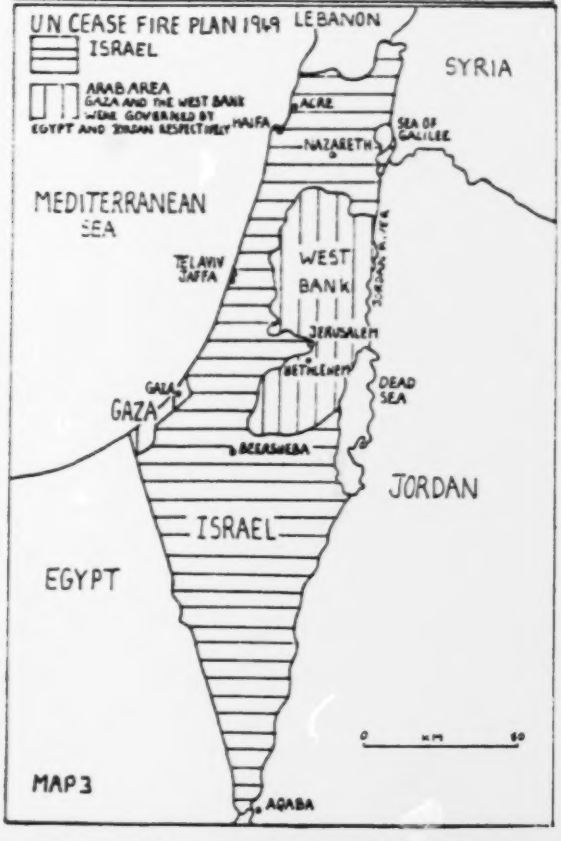
Hopes for peace seemed to be dying until U.S. President Jimmy Carter stepped in to mediate in 1978. Carter brought Sadat and Begin to the presidential retreat, Camp David. With Carter as the mediator, Sadat and Begin negotiated an Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement known as the Camp David accords. The accords, which were signed in Washington in September 1978, had two separate "frameworks for peace." The first dealt exclusively with Egypt and Israel. It called on Israel to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in exchange for the demilitarization of most of the peninsula and Egypt's recognition of Israel. The second part dealt with the Palestinian question. It outlined several steps that would lead to increased Palestinian autonomy. For signing these accords, Sadat and Begin won the 1978 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Egyptian-Israeli treaty was meant to be used as a framework for further discussions between Israel and the other Arab states. It was also hoped that the Camp David accords could be the basis for a solution to the Palestinian issue. Neither hope was realized. The Arab world denounced the treaty, and condemned Egypt for signing it. All but two Arab states cut off diplomatic relations with Egypt, voted to remove it from the Arab League, and imposed an economic boycott on Egypt.

The Camp David accords also revived the debate over UN Resolution 242. The Arab states argued that the resolution demanded the return of all the territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war. The Israelis, on the other hand, pointed out that the resolution did not say "all" territories, or even "the" territories – just "withdraw from territories." By giving back the Sinai Peninsula, conservative Israelis







Data compiled from: Smith, Charles. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988; Bickerton, I. and Pearson, M. *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1986; *Carta's Historical Map of Israel*. Jerusalem, 1977.

argued that they had met the letter of the law by withdrawing from some territories. Begin's government was committed to not trading any other territories. Israel viewed most of the remaining territories as part of the biblical land of Israel, and considered all the territories essential for Israel's security.

War and Conciliation in the 1980s

The 1980s began turbulently. In 1981, Sadat was assassinated by Islamic fundamentalists in Egypt. Earlier that year, Israel bombed Iraq's main nuclear weapons facility program at Osirak. In June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon for the second time since 1978. Unlike the 1978 invasion, which was limited to southern Lebanon, the 1982 campaign took the Israeli army all the way to Beirut.

Israeli officials explained that the invasion of Lebanon was carried out to stop PLO guerrillas from crossing the border, but it was also an effort to drive the PLO's military and political headquarters out of Lebanon entirely, to diminish the appeal of the PLO to Palestinians inside Israeli-controlled territory, and to create a pro-Israeli government in Lebanon. The Israeli army managed to drive the 12,000 PLO fighters out of Lebanon, but at a high cost in human life to both sides.

There were also great political costs. The invasion caused a shift in Israeli politics. Many Israelis opposed the war, and supported a movement called Peace Now, which was created at the beginning of the Camp David negotiations. Peace Now and other peace groups in Israel wanted to end the Lebanese conflict and the occupation of the territories. This opposition grew as the death toll mounted. At one point, Palestinians living in refugee camps in West Beirut were massacred by a Lebanese Christian militia which had cooperated with Israel during the war, while the Israeli military was supposed to be protecting the camps.

The divisions among the Israeli people over the invasion of Lebanon became clear during the next election for prime minister. In 1984, the ruling Likud party lost a great deal of support and could not win a majority. The election was a virtual tie, with the country divided between the right-wing Likud party and the more moderate Labor party. Since neither side could win the election decisively, the two rival parties were forced to share power. The result was an uneasy partnership and an agreement to rotate the office of prime minister.

Meanwhile, the political mood had also shifted in the United States. President Ronald Reagan was voted into office in 1980. He reiterated Israel's importance as a strategic asset in the Cold War and, after Israel's invasion of Lebanon, clarified U.S. foreign policy concerning Israel. Reagan called for the trading of land for peace, but maintained opposition to the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

Multinational peacekeeping troops, which included U.S. marines, were sent to Lebanon in 1982. While stationed in Beirut, the marines became embroiled in the civil war that had been raging in earnest since 1975.

The Lebanese civil war was a complex affair. It was a struggle between Christian and Muslim communities, each splintered into smaller, armed militia factions, all vying for the control of Lebanon. The United States sought to establish a stable government by helping one of the factions, the Maronites, which was the dominant Christian faction.

U.S. marines soon became the target of mostly Muslim enemy fire. U.S. forces retaliated by bombarding villages reported to be weapons sites. This resulted in further hostilities as Islamic fundamentalists began a wave of guerrilla attacks, including kidnapping Americans in Beirut and assassinating the U.S. ambassador to Lebanon. The deadliest attack was a suicide car bomb attack on the marine barracks in Beirut, which killed 241 marines in 1983. Reagan removed all U.S. personnel the next year.

In 1985, when the moderate Labor Party leader Shimon Peres was prime minister, Israel withdrew its troops from all but the last six to ten miles along the Israeli-Lebanese border. The strip of land in southern Lebanon was designated by the Israelis as a security zone (see map 4). The fifth war in the Middle East in less that forty years was over, and to many observers, peace seemed as elusive as ever.

WHY DOES THE HISTORY MATTER?

We need to know the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict if we are to understand how today's situation came into being. We also need to know the history if we are to understand the feelings and attitudes of the people involved in the conflict. By keeping in mind the horror of the murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazis we can more easily understand why Israelis feel so anxious about their security, a feeling which Arab hostility keeps alive. Likewise, by remembering how the Palestinians were expelled from their native land, turned into refugees and at times massacred, we can better appreciate why they feel such anger and resentment against Israel and the Zionist movement.

Can the history of the conflict tell us more than this? Does it help us judge which side is in the right and which side is in the wrong? Does it help us work out the best way to resolve the conflict or the best policy for the United States to adopt? Many people think that history can help us find a solution, while others consider it sensible to put historical claims aside and deal with the situation at hand.

Part II: A Crossroads in the Middle East?

In October 1991, delegations from Israel and its Arab neighbors sat down in Madrid to take part in a historic peace conference. Never before had all of the main actors in the Arab-Israeli conflict come together to discuss peace. Following the Madrid conference, the Israeli, Jordanian/Palestinian, Egyptian, Syrian and Lebanese delegations met nine more times. An eleventh round of talks was scheduled to convene late in the summer of 1993.

Although in concrete terms the peace talks have yet to change the political situation in the Middle East, the fact that they have taken place at all has surprised many observers. Much of the impetus behind the talks can be traced to three recent developments. In 1987, a Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories, called the *intifada*, altered the Western perception of the Palestinians as terrorists and drew attention to the need to find a solution to the occupation. On the international scene, the defeat of Iraq in the Persian Gulf War in early 1991 and the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the year had a tremendous political and economic impact on the Middle East.

Each of the main actors in the Arab-Israeli conflict has been forced to reassess its position in light of the recent changes in the Middle East and the world. For Americans, understanding the concerns that each delegation brings to the negotiating table is critical if we are to determine what our country's role should be.

Understanding the Middle Eastern Perspective

Israel

Israel's primary concern traditionally has been security. Surrounded by hostile Arab countries, Israelis did not feel secure in their pre-1967 borders. By occupying the territories of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and, later, the security zone in southern Lebanon, Israel created buffer zones between itself and the Arab states on its borders. Although these territories do not prevent missile attacks, they do offer natural geographic boundaries that would impede the advances of an overland army. Furthermore, the territories provide a much needed resource — water. Many Israelis supported the occupation of the territories in 1967 and the establishment of a security zone in southern Lebanon in 1985. However, today Israelis are divided over which approach will make Israel more secure: trading land for peace or incorporating the occupied territories into the state of Israel.

In recent years, Israel has developed a second concern — a troubled economy. Israel's unemployment rate currently stands above 10 percent and Israel has not yet been able to integrate many of the 500,000 immigrants who have entered Israel since 1988, most from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

The future of the occupied territories and the state of Israel's economy are two of the driving factors that have shaped Israel's position in the peace talks. When the talks began in October 1991, Israel was led by Yitzhak Shamir and the Likud party. Shamir believed that the occupied territories were an integral part of a greater Israel and essential for the security of his country. For these reasons, the Likud government promoted the development of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. Under Likud's rule, the pace of construction in the territories accelerated, especially after the Persian Gulf War.

Likud's policy affected U.S.-Israeli relations. Many U.S. officials came to believe that Israeli settlement of the occupied territories threatened the drive for peace. Before the Madrid conference, the Shamir government asked the United States to guarantee repayment of a $10 billion loan if Israel itself could not repay the money it hoped to borrow. This guarantee was requested to help resettle Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union and Ethiopia. (Israel has always sought to provide a home for all Jews who wish to immigrate.)

Although the United States had provided such loan guarantees in the past, President George Bush postponed the decision. Bush feared that the Palestinians would not participate in the peace talks if he guaranteed the loan, because the money directly or indirectly would enable more construction in the occupied territories. Halting the construction of settlements in the occupied territories became a precondition of the

Bush administration for the United States to furnish the loan guarantees to Israel.

Not everyone in Israel supported settling Jews in the occupied territories. Although trading land for peace would cause Israel to lose the buffers it had created, many argued that it could make Israel more secure in the long run by ending the conflict with the Palestinians. The controversy over settlements figured into the elections of June 1992. Shamir's Likud party was replaced with the Labor party, led by a military hero and former prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin.

Rabin's campaign pledge to channel money back into Israel proper instead of developing settlements in the occupied territories had attracted voters dissatisfied with the Likud party. Rabin gathered the political support of left-wing parties when he promised to accelerate the pace of the peace talks and to grant Palestinians self-rule within a year as a first step toward autonomy. As prime minister, Rabin halted the construction of new settlements. Jerusalem and the Jordan River valley, which Rabin considered vital for Israel's defense, were exempted from this freeze. In response to Rabin's policies, the United States granted Israel the loan guarantees that had been requested.

Although he had run on a platform of peace, Yitzhak Rabin's first year in office was marked by increased violence and lack of progress toward a Middle East peace settlement. In December 1992, Rabin expelled 415 Palestinian activists to southern Lebanon for two years after five Israeli soldiers were killed. In response to Rabin's action, the Palestinian delegation and other Arab participants threatened to boycott the peace talks. In addition, the United Nations condemned the expulsion as a violation of international law and human rights. Facing international pressure, Rabin agreed to allow the Palestinians to return to their homes by the end of 1993.

Violence in the occupied territories, however, continued to mount, delaying the resumption of the peace talks. In the month of March 1993 alone, twenty-five Palestinians and fifteen Israelis were killed in one of the bloodiest periods since the beginning of the *intifada*. The upsurge of violence prompted Rabin to close the occupied territories. Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including 120,000 workers who held jobs in Israel, were prevented from entering Israel.

Rabin again found himself in the international spotlight in July 1993, when the fiercest fighting in more than a decade erupted in southern Lebanon between pro-Iranian Lebanese guerillas and Israel. The guerillas, who fight under the direction of the Party of God (Hezbollah), have opposed the Arab-Israeli peace talks from the beginning, and have repeatedly attacked Israeli targets in southern Lebanon. In July 1993, Party of God guerillas killed seven Israeli soldiers in the buffer zone. Rabin responded by ordering his army to bombard towns and villages throughout southern Lebanon. Rabin's strategy was to pressure the Lebanese government to clamp down on the Party of God. In fact, the Israeli offensive killed more than 120 Lebanese, mostly civilians, and forced more than 300,000 residents to flee their homes. The United States helped to negotiate a cease-fire between Israel and the Party of God after a week of fighting.

Rabin's strike against the

NEW CONSTRUCTION

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Party of God seemed to be part of a larger policy to act swiftly against threats to Israeli security, while pushing ahead with peace talks. The balancing act has been tricky. Rabin has been criticized by supporters of Likud and other nationalist parties for being too willing to compromise. In August 1993, for example, Rabin allowed a member of his cabinet to meet with a senior PLO official. In addition, many of the settlers in the occupied territories have vowed to continue building new settlements. At the other end of the political spectrum, groups such as Peace Now denounced Rabin's offensive in southern Lebanon. As violence has increased on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, they have pressed for an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

Palestinians

More than 1.5 million Palestinians live in the occupied territories. (Approximately two-thirds live in their own homes and one-third live in refugee camps.) Roughly 600,000 Palestinians have remained in Israel. Another 2.5 to 3 million Palestinians live outside of Israel and the occupied territories, mostly in the Arab world. Almost a half million of these live in refugee camps in neighboring states.

The refugee problem dates back to 1948, when the declaration of the state of Israel and the subsequent war between Israel and its Arab neighbors forced more than half a million Palestinians to leave their homes in Jewish territory. They settled in refugee camps in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria, expecting to return very shortly. The 1967 war displaced another half a million Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, one-third of whom had originally been displaced from the Jewish area in 1948. Some of the refugees have moved to other Arab countries or overseas, but many remain in refugee camps in the border countries, and have asked to return to their homes ever since. Although Palestinians found shelter in the Arab countries, they are still guests, and can be cast out at any time. They depend on their host nations, which have often mistreated them. Palestinian refugees, therefore, have a precarious position in society and ardently want the establishment of a Palestinian state, claiming that only a nation of their own will guarantee their rights. In making this argument, they are similar to the Zionists in the 19th century.

From 1948 to 1967, Palestinians living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were ruled by Jordan and Egypt, respectively. Some were refugees of the 1948 war and lived in refugee camps. Others were long-time inhabitants of the region. Although they were granted full citizenship by Jordan, West Bank Palestinians periodically rioted against King Hussein, whose response was to impose military rule.

After Israel's conquest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, the Israelis began merging the West Bank and the Gaza Strip's electrical grid, water and transportation systems into their own. Access and use of resources, such as water and electricity, were restricted and sometimes cut. Water was made accessible to Israeli farmers at the expense of Palestinians. Curfews were imposed on certain towns and villages for months. Palestinians were rarely allowed to start or own a business. These policies forced many Palestinians to take menial jobs in Israel. Because Palestinians were not allowed to spend the night in Israel, they had to commute long hours from the territories to earn a living. Together, these measures have made Palestinians in the territories economically dependent on Israel.

To protest conditions in the occupied territories, Palestinians launched the *intifada* in 1987. Much of the initiative for the *intifada* came from the generation of Palestinians that had grown up under Israeli occupation. The *intifada*, however, could not change the difficult position of Palestinians in the occupied territories. Economically, the Palestinians remained vulnerable to Israeli pressure. Rabin's decision to close the occupied territories in March 1993 reduced many Palestinians to desperate poverty. Even before Rabin's election, Israel's effort to build more settlements in the occupied territories had dimmed Palestinian hopes of gaining autonomy. Most Palestinians have come to realize that they must negotiate with Israel in order to regain some autonomy before it is too late.

Since Jordan and Egypt no longer claimed the West Bank or the Gaza Strip, Palestinians were free at the onset of the peace talks to discuss their own terms with the Israelis. However, the Israelis refused to negotiate with the PLO and its leader, Yasser Arafat. The PLO's support of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein during the Persian Gulf War was a major setback. Not only was the improved public image of the Palestinians tarnished, but the financial backing of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia also was lost. When President Bush pressed for peace talks, Israel reiterated that it would meet only with Palestinians living in the occupied territories and not with Arafat and the PLO.

The *intifada*, which has the support of the PLO, created new leaders among the Palestinians. These Palestinians still considered Arafat to be their spokesman to the world, but Israel's refusal to deal with the PLO left them no choice but to act as negotiators. This delegation's moderation and willingness to discuss the plight of the Palestinians without resorting to old rhetoric has favorably impressed U.S. officials.

Rabin's election in June 1992 raised both hope and apprehension among the Palestinian people. Rabin is remembered as the minister of defense who advocated a tough policy to fight the *intifada*. However, his announcement that he would support granting self-rule for the Palestinians within a year, coupled with his decision to halt the construction of some settlements, has been seen as an improvement over the previous government's position.

As peace talks have continued, divisions among the Palestinians have deepened. The prospect of self-rule has prompted the PLO to take a more moderate position. Increasingly, however, the PLO has been challenged by Palestinians who oppose the peace process. Most influential has been Hamas – a coalition of Islamic fundamentalist groups. Israel blamed Hamas for the killing of five soldiers in the occupied territories in December 1992. Many of the 415 Palestinians deported to southern Lebanon were Hamas supporters. Israeli efforts to crack down on Hamas, however, may have backfired. Since the deportations, the influence of Hamas in the occupied territories has grown.

Elsewhere in the Arab world

Many of the Arab states of the Middle East face threats to their survival. Several countries, such as Jordan, Egypt, and Syria, are burdened by poverty and instability. To avoid chaos, these states often turn to other nations for assistance. Even wealthy oil producers, such as Saudi Arabia, have serious security concerns. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union each provided support for their allies in the region. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moscow's former allies have shifted their foreign policy.

Certainly, the Persian Gulf War also had a great impact on the region. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait led to

an alliance between the United States and much of the Arab world. Meanwhile, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's appeal for Arab unity against the West won little official support from Arab states. On the contrary, the war sharpened divisions among Arab countries, and fueled the irritation many poorer Muslims felt toward the richer Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia. Many of the issues Saddam Hussein brought into the spotlight struck a chord in the Arab world.

In addition, the political landscape of the Middle East has been reshaped by another powerful force – Islamic fundamentalism. Islamic fundamentalism has been growing since the 1960s and 1970s, although it came to American attention only with the 1979 revolution in Iran led by Ayatollah Khomeini. The fundamentalist movement calls for a state that strictly follows the teachings of Islam. Although virtually all government leaders in the Middle East are Muslim, fundamentalists claim that many of them have been corrupted by the values of the West.

The political activism of Islamic fundamentalists worried many leaders in the Middle East. In Algeria, for example, fundamentalists were poised to take over the government after winning democratic elections. The Algerian army responded by ignoring the election results and arresting fundamentalist leaders. Countries such as Egypt and Tunisia have also repressed emerging fundamentalist parties. In other countries, such as Jordan, fundamentalists have been elected to parliament. Israel is also concerned about the consequences of such a movement, because fundamentalists do not recognize Israel's existence.

All of the Arab states have been affected by the recent changes in the Middle East, but it is important to understand the unique position each of them occupies in the region.

Syria was a key Soviet ally in the Middle East for decades. When the Soviet Union began to unravel in 1991, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad realized that he needed to look elsewhere for financial and military assistance. Assad made several efforts to be accepted by the West in 1991. During the Persian Gulf War, Syria joined with the United States in the alliance against Iraq. Because Syria is influential in Lebanon, Assad's help was instrumental in gaining the release of the Western hostages in Beirut at the end of 1991.

Assad's participation in the Arab-Israeli peace talks marked a major shift in Syrian policy. Assad hopes to regain the Golan Heights and its water reserve, which Syria lost to Israel in the 1967 war. He also wants to safeguard his interests in Lebanon, which Syria has traditionally regarded as within its sphere of influence. In addition, Assad wishes to present a new moderate image to the West, and in the process gain economic aid from the United States and its allies. Finally, Assad has sought to maintain his stature in the Arab world by pressing for a settlement of the Palestinian question. Assad's boldest step in the peace talks came in May 1993, when Syrian and Israeli negotiators met separately to discuss the future of the Golan Heights and other sensitive issues.

Egypt has enjoyed close relations with the United States since the 1973 war. Signing the Camp David accords in 1978 guaranteed Egypt a significant increase in U.S. foreign aid. Today, Egypt receives the second largest U.S. foreign aid package – more than $2 billion annually. But closer ties with the United States and steadfast commitment to the peace treaty with Israel initially cost Egypt its influence in the Arab world. Egypt was isolated politically and economically by the other Arab states. Only in the last few years has Egypt been accepted again by the Arab League. The boycott of Egypt was especially hard for many Egyptians to take. Since Gamal Abd al-Nasser's rise to power and promotion of Pan-Arabism, Egypt had always been the leader in the Arab world. Egypt wants to restore its leadership in the Arab world without reneging on its peace treaty with Israel.

In July 1992, President Hosni Mubarak met with Prime Minister Rabin in Cairo to affirm Egypt's commitment to its treaty with Israel. Mubarak's influence in the region is recognized by many who see him as a possible broker between Syria and Israel. By playing the role of mediator, Mubarak has also sought to maintain the flow of financial support from the United States. Economic aid is crucial to Egypt's domestic stability.

Above all, Mubarak is proceeding with caution. He remembers the fate of his predecessor, Anwar Sadat, who was assassinated by an Islamic fundamentalist faction because of his role in forging the peace

with Israel. Mubarak is currently facing an increasingly vocal, Islamic fundamentalist movement that opposes any talks with Israel. One of Mubarak's harshest opponents, Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, was arrested in connection with the terrorist bombing of New York's World Trade Center in 1993.

Lebanon has been devastated by a civil war that began in 1975 and continued into the 1990s. Beirut, once regarded as one of the most beautiful cities on the Mediterranean, was largely ruined, and its name is associated with terrorism and hostage taking. Syria, and Lebanese militias backed by Syria, filled a power vacuum in Lebanon for most of the last decade. But recently the Lebanese government signed an agreement with Syria that allowed Lebanon to govern itself, although management of the country's foreign policy was largely relinquished to Syria.

The Lebanese are eager to rebuild their country, even while Lebanon's future remains enmeshed in past conflicts. More than 30,000 Syrian troops are stationed in Lebanon, serving both to prevent a renewal of fighting and to ensure Syria's influence in the country. Meanwhile, Israeli troops remain in southern Lebanon, and continue to pump water out of Lebanon's Litany River. The battles between Israeli troops and guerrillas from the Party of God in July 1993 were only the bloodiest episode in a string of clashes that extends back to early 1992.

Jordan has been in an unofficial state of peace with Israel since the early 1970s. Jordan, however, still plays a key role in the Arab-Israeli conflict. More than two-thirds of the country's population is Palestinian, although the country's ruler, King Hussein, is not a Palestinian Arab. The king has been willing to discuss peace, and has strong personal contacts with the West, although he has been wary of reaching out to Israel. Relations between King Hussein and Jordan's Palestinians have often been strained. The king, for example, has been the target of several assassination attempts, and in 1970 he ordered his army to expel the PLO from the country. At the same time, King Hussein has acted as an advocate of Palestinian self-determination. In 1988, he gave up Jordan's claim to the West Bank, thus allowing Palestinians there to voice their own claim for autonomy.

The Persian Gulf War had a profound impact on Jordan. With Israel to its west and Iraq to its east, King Hussein recognized that Jordan was in a precarious position. Because of Saddam Hussein's popularity with Palestinians in Jordan, King Hussein was unable to support the military coalition against Iraq. This cost him the financial backing of Saudi Arabia and jeopardized his friendship with the United States, neither of which Jordan could afford to lose. The war also left Jordan trying to absorb 300,000 Palestinians who were expelled from Kuwait.

King Hussein fears that further turmoil in the region could bring another wave of Palestinian refugees into Jordan and undermine the stability of his government. Furthermore, the king's efforts to achieve peace with Israel may be endangered by democratic political reforms. Due to the popular opposition to Israel and the growing strength of Islamic fundamentalists, a democratic Jordan would be less likely to come to terms with Israel.

KEY ISSUES IN THE PEACE TALKS

The Arab-Israeli peace talks are an opportunity to address a variety of issues. The most important are:

The status of the occupied territories: The West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights are still

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under Israel's military control. Syria wants the Golan Heights back and it says that, after receiving the Heights, it will decide whether to recognize Israel. Israel considers this area vital for its security, but, under Rabin, it has placed the issue on the negotiating table. Egypt and Jordan have renounced their claims on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and support the Palestinians' demands for control of these territories.

Jerusalem: This historic city is now under the control of Israel, which wishes the city to become internationally recognized as Israel's capital. Palestinians want East Jerusalem, which is primarily populated by Arabs, to be the capital of a future Palestinian state. Muslims the world over want free access to East Jerusalem because of its religious significance.

Palestinian sovereignty: Palestinians would like to return to the proposals set out in the Camp David accords. Autonomy would be a transitional stage toward independence. Palestinians would have full control of their land, resources (especially its water and electricity), immigration, local government, and internal police force. Israel would be responsible for its foreign affairs and would withdraw its security forces from the major Palestinian towns. Rabin has called for Palestinian autonomy within a year, but has been vague about details concerning autonomy, and the process has not moved ahead.

Israeli settlements: In 1980, there were 10,000 Israelis living in the occupied territory. There are now more than 100,000, most of them in East Jerusalem. Even so, Arabs far outnumber Israelis in the occupied territory. Palestinians want construction of the Jewish settlements to cease entirely. In July 1992, Rabin announced that settlements already under construction, numbering 8,786, would be completed, but those in the planning stage (6,681) would not. Rabin did not include settlements around Jerusalem, numbering 1,686, in this provision.

Security: Many Israelis do not feel secure in their pre-1967 borders. They argue that Israel's pre-1967 borders were too narrow, ten miles across at the narrowest point, and they left Israel vulnerable. Likewise, Arab states want buffer zones and demilitarization to protect them from an aggressive Israel.

Lebanon: Lebanon wants Israeli troops to withdraw from the six-to-ten mile strip that Israel has occupied since 1982. Israel wants to retain control of this strip as a security zone in order to protect itself from guerrilla attacks and from the Syrian troops that occupy Lebanon.

Part III: U.S. Thinking and the Politics of Peace

Western powers have been deeply involved in the Middle East since the 1800s. With the expansion of the oil industry in the 20th century, those relationships have grown closer. Until World War II, Britain was the dominant power in the region, but since the late 1940s the United States has assumed the role once occupied by Britain. The United States counts among its allies many Middle Eastern countries. As a result, the United States has been at the center of efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Without U.S. mediation, the peace talks that began in 1991 would not have occurred. Now Americans must decide what role, if any, the United States should play in promoting peace in the region.

The Cold War shapes U.S. thinking

For decades, U.S. thinking about the Middle East was dominated by the Cold War. U.S. strategy was driven by the need to find allies that would help contain communism. Israel became a strategic asset in the region. Its intelligence network cooperated with the United States in gathering information and its secret service, the Mossad, assisted the United States in covert operations.

However, U.S. support for Israel was not defined by strategic concerns alone. Many Americans felt that the United States had a special relationship with Israel that was based in part on a moral obligation to help the Jews after the Holocaust, and in part on a belief that, as the only state in the region with a Western-style political system, Israel should have U.S. support.

For these reasons, the United States developed very close relations with Israel. But the United States also formed ties with other nations in the region to create buffers against Soviet expansion. The United States supported the royal family of Saudi Arabia and the shah of Iran,* principally through arms sales, and after 1973 it developed close ties with Egypt.

The result was a fairly clear U.S. policy – one that remained remarkably consistent for 25 years. The United States opposed the expansion of Soviet influence into the region. U.S. leaders would not forge links with Israel's immediate neighbors if they were openly hostile to Israel's security. Only when these states assured the United States that they would not harm Israel and would not forcibly promote the creation of an independent Palestinian state did the United States help them financially. After the 1967 war, the United States supported Israel's occupation of the territories until Israel's safety was secured by recognition from its neighbors.

Many Americans associated the Middle East with terrorism, and placed much of the blame on Israel's enemies. In 1979, after the shah was overthrown in Iran, Iranian revolutionaries held fifty-two U.S. embassy workers hostage for more than a year. During the 1980s, U.S. attention turned to Beirut, where several Americans were held hostage by radical groups, some operating with Iranian or Syrian support.

Among the most dramatic terrorist attacks on Americans were the shootings of American tourists at the Rome and Vienna airports on December 27, 1985, and the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988. In 1993, Islamic fundamentalists from the Arab world were responsible for the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York. These incidents heightened American mistrust and animosity toward the Arab states, and made Americans wary of involvement in the region.

New realities, new relationships

The end of the Cold War has been primarily responsible for a shift in U.S. policy toward the Middle East over the past few years. U.S. leaders have been compelled to re-evaluate the country's long-standing foreign policy priorities. The collapse of the Soviet Union also prompted new approaches among a number of Arab leaders. During the Cold War, many of them had depended on Soviet financial support and

*Ninety-five percent of the people of Iran are Muslim. Ethnically, most of the country's people are not Arab.

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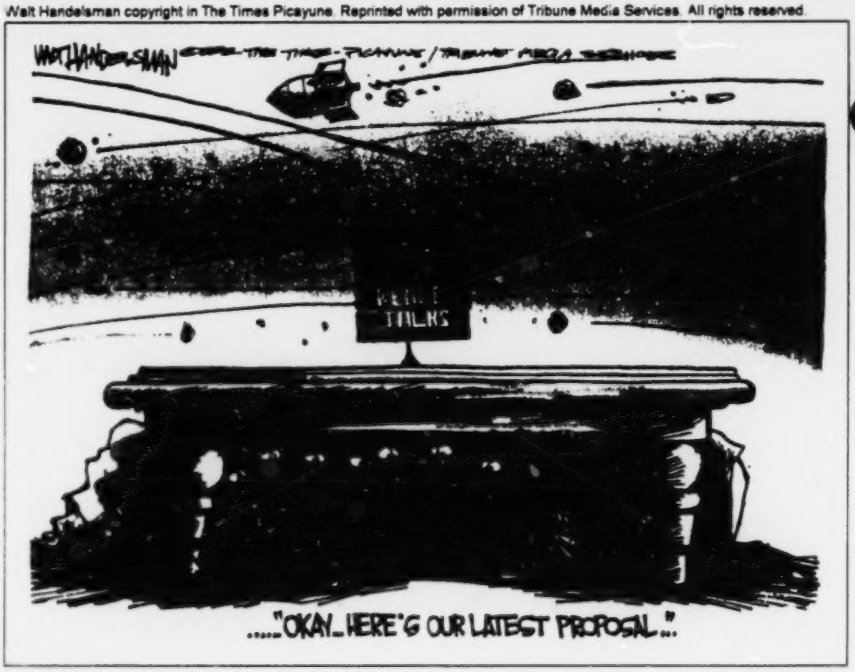

military backing. With the United States as the only remaining superpower, former allies of the Soviet Union, including Syria and the PLO, re-examined their situation and decided that they needed to gain U.S. favor.

Meanwhile, the image of the Palestinians in the United States underwent a significant change as a result of the *intifada*. Beginning in 1987, Palestinian protesters began to oppose the presence of Israeli soldiers on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, fighting only with rocks and sticks. The choice of weapons was purposeful. By refraining from using guns, the Palestinians painted a picture of David against Goliath, recasting the image of the struggle from the one Yasser Arafat had represented.

The Israeli response was harsh: jailing Palestinians without trial, destroying the homes of suspected Palestinian terrorists, closing schools and universities, shooting at young demonstrators, and imposing curfews. With scenes of the *intifada* being broadcast on television screens worldwide, the Palestinian cause won new sympathy. Furthermore, Arafat's renunciation of terrorism as a means of attaining a state and his official recognition of Israel in 1988 opened a U.S.-PLO dialogue that ended without any results in June 1990.

The *intifada* reshaped public perceptions of the Arab-Israeli conflict at a time when U.S.-Israeli relations were being reassessed for other reasons. During the Cold War, the United States had been willing to gloss over its few differences with Israel because of Israel's strategic importance. But as the Cold War ended, U.S. and Israeli goals diverged, and many in the United States began to wonder if Israel was still strategically important to the United States.

The Persian Gulf War raised additional questions about the U.S. role in Middle East. The war created the first U.S.-Arab coalition. Major Arab states like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and even Syria, joined the coalition against Iraq. At the same time, Saudi Arabia – which had led the oil embargo in 1973 – offered to pump more oil to make up for what was lost from Iraq and Kuwait.

The Persian Gulf War marked the first time that the Arab states were strategically more important than Israel was to the United States. During the Persian Gulf War, Israel could not help the United States militarily for fear that entering the war would break up the anti-Iraq Arab coalition. By not retaliating against Iraqi Scud missile attacks, however, Israel earned the appreciation of the United States and its Western and Arab coalition partners.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the Persian Gulf War committed the United States to the peace process in the Middle East. President Bush promised that, after defeating Iraq, the United States would turn its attention to achieving lasting peace in the region. Bush intended to use the long-standing ties between Israel and the United States, in addition to the newly improved relations with the Arab world, to make the Middle East a building block of the "new world order" that he hoped would emerge as a result of the Persian Gulf War.

Dilemmas for the United States

The continuation of the Middle East peace talks means that the administration of President Bill Clinton and the American public will have some difficult decisions to make. Among the most important is the issue of the U.S. relationship with Israel.

In recent years, the United States and Israel have had some highly publicized disagreements. For example, the United States discovered that a U.S. citizen, Jonathan Pollard, was spying on the United States for Israel. More serious was the dispute between President Bush and Prime Minister Shamir over the construction of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. The controversy over Israel's settlement policy – particularly Bush's refusal to approve a $10 billion loan guarantee for new construction in Israel – nearly derailed the peace talks. The election of Yitzhak Rabin in 1992 helped to heal the rift in U.S.-Israeli relations and to keep the peace process alive.

U.S. leaders likewise face new questions regarding their relations with the Arab world. The biggest decisions will revolve around two key U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf War, Egypt and Syria.

Egypt and the United States have had good relations since the Camp David accords were signed. After the Persian Gulf War, the United States made a gesture it rarely makes even to its closest friends: it wrote off almost $7 billion in debt that Egypt owed the United States while continuing to provide more than $2 billion annually in foreign aid. In the post-Cold War world, Egypt has no one else to turn to for such substantial financial and military aid. Should the United States continue to be Egypt's primary benefactor?

The United States seems to be entering a new relationship with Syria, which may include providing economic aid to the Syrian government. There is still concern, however, about Syrian support for terrorism, human rights abuses, arms proliferation, and the possible use of U.S. aid to buy missiles from China. Should the United States offer Syria aid to make up for what it lost when the Soviet Union collapsed?

Finally, in addition to its relationship with each of the parties to the conflict, the United States must decide what its overall approach to the peace talks should be. Should the United States choose sides?

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MIDDLE EAST PEACE
...SIGH.... I GUESS IT'S WORTH THE WAIT....

Should the United States persevere until a settlement is achieved? Should the United States withdraw from the region altogether? Should the United States urge the UN to play a greater role in resolving the conflict? Americans have not voiced a clear consensus on the course the United States should take.

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Options in Brief

Option 1 — Back Israeli Claims

Since its creation, Israel has stood out as the only nation in the region that is based on the principles we cherish — including democracy, rule of law, and free enterprise. Israel has also become one of our most steadfast allies, and played a vital part in our effort to stop Soviet communism. Because Israel still faces these threats, we cannot ask Israeli leaders to trade the territories they now occupy for Arab promises of peace. Nor should we support the creation of a new Palestinian state. Therefore, as peace talks progress, the United States must support Israel's formal annexation of the territories with the hope that this arrangement would help promote Israel's safety and security.

Option 2 — Support a Palestinian State

Now that the Cold War is over, the United States can pursue the same goals in the Middle East that it has in other parts of the world — promoting self-determination, democracy, and ending violations of human rights. U.S. support of Israel has sparked anti-American sentiment throughout the region for years and made Americans the target of terrorism. The United States must become a strong advocate of a Palestinian state and begin forging closer ties with the Arab world in order to protect our interests. At the same time, we should promote the cause of self-determination for the Palestinian people. Therefore, as peace talks progress, the United States must support a solution that guarantees the creation of a Palestinian state and strengthens our ties with Arab nations.

Option 3 — Encourage Compromise

Today, for the first time, there is a real chance to bring about a lasting peace in the Middle East. The United States must not stand on the sidelines at this historic moment. As the world's only superpower, we have a duty to get involved. A comprehensive peace in the Middle East today can be achieved only through compromise and U.S. mediation. Israel will have to surrender territory that it has occupied since 1967. At the same time, the Palestinians must offer full recognition of Israel's legitimacy and permanence in the region in return for some form of Palestinian self-government. Therefore, as the peace talks progress, the United States must use its economic and political influence to force both sides to make compromises that will lead to peace.

Option 4 — Withdraw from the Region

In the wake of the Cold War and our victory in the Persian Gulf War, the Middle East is a very different place. The United States can afford to reduce its involvement in the Middle East and focus attention on problems here at home. A major U.S. presence in the Middle East may have been justified in the days of the Cold War, but today no vital U.S. interests in the region are threatened. Therefore, now that the peace process has begun, we must immediately withdraw from the region and focus our attention on our domestic agenda and foreign policy concerns here in the Western Hemisphere.

Option 5 — Pass the Baton to the UN

As the representative of the international community, the UN is uniquely qualified to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict and restore peace and security in the region. With the Cold War over, the UN can use its powers to guarantee the security of Israel, oversee the eventual establishment of Palestinian self-rule, and end the arms race in the Middle East. Only a truly international solution will work in the Middle East. Therefore, the United States should actively support UN efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, give Palestinians control over their own destiny, and end the build-up of weapons on the region.

Option 1

Back Israeli Claims

Since 1948, the United States and Israel have had a special relationship. The United States was one of the first nations to grant diplomatic recognition of the new state in 1948, and it has played a key role in Israel's development for the past twenty-five years. Since its creation, Israel has stood out as the only nation in the region that is based on the principles we cherish — including democracy, rule of law, and free enterprise. Israel has also become one of our most steadfast allies, and played a vital part in our effort to stop Soviet communism. In return, the United States has vowed to protect Israel from those who seek to destroy it.

Today, the Cold War is over and the world has changed dramatically. However, one thing has not changed over the last forty-five years — Israel still faces threats to its survival. Nineteen of twenty Arab states officially refuse to recognize Israel, boycott Israeli goods, and consider themselves to be in a state of war with Israel. At the same time, Palestinians on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip continue their *intifada* against Israel. Because Israel still faces these threats, we cannot ask Israeli leaders to trade the territories they now occupy for Arab promises of peace. Nor should we support the creation of a new Palestinian state. These actions would only threaten Israeli security by providing a base for terrorist attacks or a staging ground for an invasion by more powerful Arab nations.

What solution to the conflict should the United States pursue? Israel is a good friend and will continue to be an important ally and advocate of U.S. interests in the region. Therefore, as peace talks progress, the United States must support Israel's formal annexation of the territories with the hope that this arrangement would help promote Israel's safety and security.

What steps should the United States take?

The United States should urge Israel to:

- Continue to administer and develop the territories won in the 1967 war as a way to provide security from invasion and terrorist attacks by its Arab neighbors.
- Station troops in the security zone of southern Lebanon to prevent terrorist attacks against Israel.
- Offer limited local self-government for the Palestinians living in the territories.

The United States should pressure the Arab states to:

- Recognize Israel's existence and end the state of war between them and Israel.
- End the economic boycott of Israel and encourage the Palestinians to end the *intifada*.

We should also:

- Require countries in the Middle East receiving U.S. foreign aid to recognize Israel.
- Recognize united Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move our embassy there.
- Offer loan guarantees to Israel so that it can continue to build new homes for Jewish immigrants.

PROS

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

1. Israel is an ally of the United States against Arab states, like Syria, that have waged a terrorist war against American citizens.

2. Israel has always been a key part of U.S. covert operations and intelligence gathering in the Middle East. Continued U.S.-Israeli cooperation is invaluable to U.S. security in the region.

3. The United States demanded for years that the Soviet Union let Jews emigrate. Now that they are free to go, the United States has a moral obligation to make sure that they have a place to resettle in Israel.

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4. Without the security provided by the territories Israel now occupies, Israeli leaders would be more likely to take military action against even minor threats to Israel's borders.

CONS

OPPOSING ARGUMENTS

1. By sanctioning Israel's occupation of land acquired by military force, the United States is giving a green light to aggressive regimes around the world.

2. Israeli occupation of Arab territories has violated international standards of human rights. Palestinians have been killed, jailed without trial, and tortured by the Israeli military. The homes of those suspected of terrorism have been destroyed. The United States must not support any nation that violates human rights.

3. Key Palestinian leaders have renounced terrorism, recognized Israel's right to exist, and expressed a willingness to negotiate with Israel. Unqualified U.S. support of Israel only serves to make Israel less conciliatory. This will destroy the new Palestinian openness and any possibility of peace.

4. U.S. policy must consider other concerns in the region, such as access to oil, closer relations with the Arab world, and promoting democracy and self-determination. Our alliance with Israel jeopardizes the opportunity presented by the Persian Gulf War to improve U.S. relations with the Arab world.

5. We are already spending too much energy and money in the Middle East. We should focus instead on domestic issues.

Option 2

Support a Palestinian State

U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East has traditionally been guided by strategic concerns, such as preventing Soviet expansion. This concern led the United States to support some states simply because they opposed communism. This is the case with Israel. But now that the Cold War is over, the United States can pursue the same goals in the Middle East that it has in other parts of the world – promoting self-determination, democracy, and ending violations of human rights.

In the wake of the Persian Gulf War, the Middle East is a very different place. Our Arab allies, especially Syria and Egypt, were helpful in the effort to defeat Iraq. In future conflicts, closer ties with these states will be valuable again. Meanwhile, Israel is militarily strong and secure. The divisions in the Arab world caused by the Persian Gulf War make the prospect of a united Arab attack on Israel very unlikely. At the same time, Israel continues to occupy land illegally and deny Palestinians self-determination. U.S. support of Israel has sparked anti-American sentiment throughout the region for years and made Americans the target of terrorism. The United States must become a strong advocate of a Palestinian state and begin forging closer ties with the Arab world. This policy will greatly reduce the anti-American sentiment that has been used in the past by radical rulers, such as the Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, to garner support for their regimes. It will allow American ideals of democracy, as well as economic development, to filter into the region.

What solution to the conflict should the United States pursue? The United States should try to forge closer ties with the Arab world in order to protect our interests. At the same time, we should promote the cause of self-determination for the Palestinian people. Therefore, as peace talks progress, the United States must support a solution that guarantees the creation of a Palestinian state and strengthens our ties with Arab nations.

What steps should the United States take?

The United States should pressure Israel to:

- Withdraw its troops from the occupied territories and the so-called security zone in southern Lebanon.
- Remove settlements from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and East Jerusalem.

The United States should urge the Arab states to:

- Assist in the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem as its capital.
- Recognize Israel, but only after the Israeli occupation ends.
- Cooperate fully with the United States on regional security issues and other critical regional problems.

We should also:

- Reduce economic and military aid and trade with Israel if Israeli leaders do not comply with this plan.
- Recognize the Palestinian state and sponsor its membership in the UN.
- Stop all covert activities with Israel.

PROS SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

1. The United States must support self-determination for people all around the world. Historically, peoples that have been deprived of self-determination, like the Palestinians, have been a source of international instability.

2. Israel has acquired territory at the expense of its Arab neighbors, and has violated the human rights of Palestinians under occupation. The United States must take a moral stand and refuse to be party to such behavior.

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3. The United States and its allies have a vital need for Middle Eastern oil. We should try to establish better relations with the Arab nations to ensure stable prices and access to oil.

4. Our support for Israel and Israeli policies was a liability to the United States during the Persian Gulf War because it threatened to break up the U.S.-Arab coalition. We should support the end of Israeli occupation now, so that this will not be an issue in future relations with Arab states.

CONS OPPOSING ARGUMENTS

1. To take the side of the Arabs against the Israelis will ally the United States with states that have sponsored anti-American terrorism, supported Saddam Hussein in the Persian Gulf War, and, in the case of Syria, slaughtered thousands of their own people.

2. A Palestinian state will serve as a base for terrorism against Israel, possibly leading to another war in the region.

3. There never was a Palestinian state, and there is no need for one now. Palestinians are Arabs and can call any Arab nation home. Palestinians already form the majority of Jordan's population.

4. Because the oil-exporting Arab states need to keep their foreign markets, and because they feel the need for U.S. protection against Iraq and Iran, they will sell oil to the United States regardless of the condition of U.S.-Arab or U.S.-Israeli relations. Therefore it is not necessary to design a Middle Eastern policy based on closer Arab ties.

5. We are already sending billions of dollars to the Middle East and receiving little in return. Supporting a new state in the region will be even more costly and no more beneficial to the United States

Option 3

ENCOURAGE COMPROMISE

For forty-five years, Arabs and Israelis have fought bitterly over issues that seem to permit no compromise. But today, for the first time, there is a real chance to bring about a lasting peace in the Middle East. The United States must not stand on the sidelines at this historic moment. As the world's only superpower, we have a duty to get involved, especially after our military victory in the Persian Gulf War. Only the United States has the influence to develop a compromise solution and persuade all in the region to accept it.

Many attempts have been made to reach a settlement in the conflict between Arabs and Israelis. However, only one has proven successful – the U.S.-mediated Camp David accords, which brought about peace between Egypt and Israel. The success of that effort rested on the willingness of both sides to compromise by trading land for peace, and on the active role the United States played in the negotiations. A comprehensive peace in the Middle East today can be achieved only through compromise and U.S. mediation. In practice, this means Israel will have to surrender territory that it has occupied since 1967. At the same time, the Palestinians must compromise on their national aspirations by offering full recognition of Israel's legitimacy and permanence in the region in return for some form of Palestinian self-government.

What solution to the conflict should the United States pursue? The United States is in a unique position as the only mediator that has been acceptable to all parties in the conflict. Therefore, as the peace talks progress, the United States must use its economic and political influence to force both sides to make compromises that will lead to peace.

What steps should the United States take?

The United States should pressure Israel to:

- Compromise on the extent and character of military occupation in the territories, while retaining some strategically important areas for security.
- Withdraw from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon in exchange for the permanent demilitarization of those areas and the placement of an international force there.
- Accept Palestinian self-government.

The United States should pressure the Arab states to:

- Immediately suspend the economic boycott and encourage the Palestinians to end the *intifada*.
- Sign peace treaties with Israel in order to reassure the Israelis that Palestinian autonomy will not result in further aggression on the part of the Arab states.

We should also:

- Offer foreign aid to countries in the Middle East that support the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Permission granted for duplication

PROS SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

1. The only agreements that have been successful in the Middle East have been brokered by the United States. The United States must again take a leading role and must be willing to back up a compromise if a lasting solution is to be attained.

2. The parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict are now finally interested in compromise. The United States needs to speed up the peace process before interest fades and extremists gain control.

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3. The United States has a vital interest in settling the Arab-Israeli conflict in order to increase stability in the region.

4. The peace and prosperity of the world depends on the willingness of the United States to exercise leadership in helping resolve difficult international problems.

CONS OPPOSING ARGUMENTS

1. The United States must not impose a solution on the people of the Middle East. This plan makes the United States directly involved in the process and responsible for its success or, more likely, failure.

2. Not only do extremists in Israel not want to give back land, they would like to expand to all of the lands of biblical Israel. Not only do extremists among the Palestinians not want to settle for anything less than statehood, they would like to retake all of Palestine back for the Arabs. Considering the political pressures on both sides, compromise will be impossible.

3. A peace plan that forces Israel to relinquish territory will leave the country vulnerable to attack and heighten Israel's sense of insecurity.

4. This plan does not guarantee Palestinians the one thing they need to make them equals with the Israelis in the land of Palestine — an independent nation.

5. This plan will commit the United States to long-term, direct involvement in the affairs of the Middle East and, in the long run, may be extremely costly.

Option 4

WITHDRAW FROM THE REGION

The United States has been directly involved in the Middle East for many years, mainly to prevent Soviet expansion into the region. The United States has also taken it upon itself to be the protector of the state of Israel and a major financial supporter of both Israel and Egypt, at a cost of more than $5 billion annually. At the same time, U.S. presidents and diplomats have invested enormous amounts of time and prestige trying to bring about a solution to the seemingly unresolvable conflict between Arabs and Israelis. But in the wake of the Cold War and our victory in the Persian Gulf War, the Middle East is a very different place. The United States can afford to reduce its involvement in the Middle East and focus attention on problems here at home.

A major U.S. presence in the Middle East may have been justified in the days of the Cold War, but today no vital U.S. interests in the region are threatened. The victory of the United States in the Persian Gulf War left Iraq unable to threaten its neighbors, and ensured a steady flow of oil to the West. At the same time, Israel is effectively at peace with two of its neighbors, Egypt and Jordan, and faces no real threat from any other country in the region. Without the support of the Soviet Union, even Syria has given up its radical policies. Americans now have an opportunity to turn their attention homeward. We should invest the time and money we would spend on the Middle East in some of our long-standing problems, such as economic development, crime, homelessness, the environment and education.

What solution to the conflict should the United States pursue? This is not our problem to solve. If a lasting peace is possible at all, it can only be achieved by those in the Middle East. Therefore, now that the peace process has begun, we must immediately withdraw from the region and focus our attention on our domestic agenda and foreign policy concerns here in the Western Hemisphere.

What steps should the United States take?

The United States should urge Israel and the Arab states to:

- Continue to meet in order to find a solution to their conflict.

We should also:

- Immediately end economic and military aid to Israel and Egypt.
- End the practice of "writing off" debts owed to us by Middle Eastern nations, and stop the practice of guaranteeing development loans.
- Remove the remaining U.S. forces from the Middle East in an orderly but prompt fashion.
- Address our domestic needs and issues in the Western Hemisphere.

PROS

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

1. Accepting the "responsibility to lead" ruined the British Empire earlier in this century. The same fate awaits the United States if it continues to accept global responsibilities.

2. There is no reason that Middle Eastern oil should be a central concern of U.S. foreign policy. We can meet our energy needs by importing oil from other regions, using alternative fuels, and by conservation.

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3. Removing ourselves from the Middle East will force the countries of the region to deal directly with each other and allow them to be self-reliant.

4. The Arab-Israeli dispute is a century-old conflict based on claims going back thousands of years. It is not our problem, nor should we try to solve it.

CONS

OPPOSING ARGUMENTS

1. Too many nations in the Middle East depend on U.S. economic assistance and military protection. A U.S. withdrawal will cause chaos throughout the region and set off an arms race among Middle Eastern states.

2. Even if the United States can get along without Middle Eastern oil, our trading partners in Western Europe and Japan would be crippled by a crisis in the region.

3. As the world's only superpower, we have a moral responsibility to help people in need and we would be betraying this responsibility by withdrawing from the region.

4. Since the declaration of the state of Israel in 1948, no peace discussions or settlements in the Arab-Israeli conflict have ever been achieved without pressure from the United States. Only our continued involvement can bring about any peace in the region.

5. The threat to Israel may seem diminished now, but Syria, for example, has developed chemical warheads that could reach Israel.

Option 5

PASS THE BATON TO THE UN

For decades, the Arab-Israeli conflict has defied all attempts at a long-term settlement. No one country acting alone can resolve this dispute. Instead, we must cooperate internationally to solve problems in the region. The world's growing interdependence makes such an approach unavoidable.

As the representative of the international community, the UN is uniquely qualified to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict and restore peace and security in the region. For decades, the UN has sent peacekeeping forces to trouble spots around the world. For example, after World War II, the UN became the trustee of dozens of colonies, overseeing their transition to independence. Recently, the UN has been active in setting up "Transition Authorities," which oversee war-torn or occupied nations, such as Namibia and Cambodia, until peace is assured and a new government is formed. Finally, the UN actively inspects weapons programs (such as those in Iraq) to contain the spread of nuclear weapons. With the Cold War over, the UN can now use its powers to guarantee the security of Israel, oversee the eventual establishment of Palestinian self-rule, and end the arms race in the Middle East.

What solution to the conflict should the United States pursue? Only a truly international solution will work in the Middle East. Therefore, the United States should actively support UN efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, give Palestinians control over their own destiny, and end the build-up of weapons in the region.

What steps should the United States take?

The United States should urge the UN to:

- Use its authority under the UN Charter to become the administrator of a new "Palestinian UN Protected Zone" (consisting of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) and create a "Transitional Authority" to oversee the territory during a five-year transition to full Palestinian self-determination.

- Send peacekeeping forces into the disputed territories to prevent further violence and human rights abuses and to guarantee Israel's security by monitoring these territories.

- Declare an embargo on arms sales to the Middle East, and monitor the development of weapons of mass destruction.

The United States should urge Israel and the Arab states to:

- Withdraw their military forces from the disputed territories of southern Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and accept the permanent demilitarization of these areas and the presence of UN peacekeeping forces.

We should also:

- Assist in the international solution to this conflict by banning all sales of U.S. weapons to the Middle East and pressuring other nations to participate in the arms embargo. We should also cut off aid to any state that violates the arms embargo or the demilitarization of the region.

- Contribute U.S. troops to a UN peacekeeping force and urge our allies to do the same.

Permission granted for duplication

PROS SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

1. Now that the Cold War is over, it is possible for the first time to forge an effective international solution in this divided region.

2. The UN is the only organization that can bring about a fair settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The UN was created in part to deal with trust territories, peace keeping, and transitional governments. With the repeal of a 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism, the UN has affirmed its commitment to impartiality.

3. By ignoring UN Resolution 242, we undermine the credibility of the UN. By implementing 242, we build on the experience of international cooperation during the Persian Gulf War, promote respect for international law, and move closer to a world order based on the UN Charter. In short, implementing 242 would transform the spirit of international cooperation into a serious and reliable effort.

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4. The creation of a neutral, disarmed, and internationally monitored Palestine will make Israel more, not less, secure. It will remove the point of contention between Palestinians and Israelis. It will diminish the friction between Israel and its neighboring Arab states, and it will serve as a buffer between them.

CONS OPPOSING ARGUMENTS

1. The failure of the UN to end the war in Bosnia and bring peace to Somalia has led many in the Middle East to question the UN's ability to resolve conflicts in their own region.

2. From the start, the UN has been dominated by the United States. Allowing the UN to take the lead in resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute would only add another layer of complication to our country's entanglement in the Middle East.

3. By turning everything over to the UN, the United States will be giving up its ability to design its own foreign policy in a region with vital U.S. interests.

4. The UN has never been impartial with regard to the Middle East conflict. It has always supported Palestinian demands and approved dozens of resolutions against Israel. There is no reason to believe the UN can be impartial now.

Ten-Day Lesson Plan

DAY ONE

Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict: preparation

Objective: This two-day discussion activity will introduce key issues underlying the Arab-Israeli conflict.

1. Announce that the class will go back in history to 1920 to examine the Arab-Israeli conflict. Distribute "Arabs and Jews in Palestine — 1920." After students read the handout, call on them to identify other parts of the world where two peoples have claimed the same land (e.g., native Americans and European settlers in the United States; French and Germans in Alsace-Lorraine; Africans and Afrikaners in South Africa; Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland; Serbs, Croats, and Muslims in Bosnia).

2. Divide the class into groups of four students. Instruct the groups to use the remainder of the period to draw up a compromise proposal that will accommodate both Arabs and Jews. Issues to be addressed are outlined in the handout under "To Think About."

Homework: Students should read the "Introduction" of the background readings to prepare for the Day Two activity.

DAY TWO

Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict: presentation

1. Call on spokespersons from each group to present their proposals for compromise to the class. Ask them to begin with a brief assessment of the goals and concerns of both Arabs and Jews in 1920. Record the most coherent proposals on the chalkboard.

2. After the presentations are complete, compare the proposals on the chalkboard. How do the proposals attempt to weigh the competing claims to Palestine? How did the rise of nationalism complicate the issue? Why was the period after World War I an important historical juncture for the development of the present Arab-Israeli conflict?

Homework: Students should read Part I of the background readings and complete "Study Guide — Part I."

DAY THREE

Mapping the Arab-Israeli conflict

Objective: This one-day exercise will clarify the territorial changes connected with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

1. Distribute "Mapping the Arab-Israeli Conflict." Emphasize that students should use both Part I of the background readings and the maps on page 9 to complete the worksheet. (Students may be given the option of working individually or in pairs.)

2. After students have completed the worksheet, ask them to identify the events that left the greatest impact on the map of the Middle East (e.g., the 1948 and 1967 wars; the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty). Which geographic areas are currently at the center of the Arab-Israeli conflict?

Homework: Students should read Part II of the background readings and complete "Study Guide — Part II" to prepare for a role play based on the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

DAY FOUR

Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective: preparation

Objective: This two-day role play will help students better understand the perspectives of the participants in the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

1. Ask students to identify international events in the past five years that explain why Israelis and Arabs agreed to take part in peace talks. How are the talks related to the collapse of the Soviet Union? The Persian Gulf War? The immigration of Jews from the former Soviet Union? The *intifada*?

2. Divide the class into groups of three to five students. Each group should be assigned the role of a delegation in the Arab-Israeli peace talks (i.e., Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, Syrian, Egyptian, or Lebanese). Instruct the groups to use the remainder of the period to formulate a convincing three-to-five minute opening statement on the perspectives and goals of their respective delegations. The statements should be based on student responses to Part I and Part II of the study guide. For example, the Palestinian delegation should begin by explaining the historical territorial claims of the Palestinians, summarize the Palestinian viewpoint on the formation of Israel, and Israel's subsequent conflicts with neighboring Arab states, and assess the current status of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Finally, the delegation should summarize the goals the Palestinians wish to achieve at the peace conference.

DAY FIVE

Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective: presentation

1. Call on group spokespersons to present the statements of their respective groups. Encourage spokespersons to speak clearly and convincingly. After the opening presentations, call on group members to point out what their delegations would consider distortions of history by other groups.

2. After concluding the role play, ask students to identify the major areas of disagreement between the Arabs and the Israelis. How do the positions of the Arab delegations differ from one another? Explain that in fact the Palestinians and Jordanians have been represented by a single delegation at the peace talks. What historical factors account for that arrangement? Which issues seem most difficult to resolve?

Homework: Students should read Part III of the background readings and complete "Study Guide — Part III."

DAY SIX

Advocating the five options: organization and preparation

Objective: This three-day simulation calls on students to advocate one of the five options. Students will come away with a deeper understanding of the range of policy options available to the United States while also exploring the relationship between basic values and foreign policy.

1. Inform students that they will participate in a simulation using the options and the background readings. Form five groups of three to four students. Assign an option to each group. The remainder of the class will serve as members of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate. (In smaller classes, other teachers or administrators may be invited to serve as members of the committee.)

2. Distribute "Presenting Your Option" to the five option groups and "Charting U.S. Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict" to the Senate committee. Inform students that each option group will be called upon on Day Seven to present the case for its assigned option to the committee. Explain that option groups should follow the instructions in "Presenting Your Option." Note that the option groups should begin by assigning each member a role. (As an extra

challenge, ask the groups to design a poster illustrating the best case for their option.) While the option groups are preparing for their presentation, members of the committee should develop cross-examination questions for Day Eight (see "Charting U.S. Foreign Policy"). Remind committee members that they are expected to turn in their cross-examination questions at the end of the simulation.

Homework: Students should complete preparations for the simulation.

DAY SEVEN

Advocating the five options: presentation

1. Organize the room so that the five option groups face a row of desks reserved for the Committee on Foreign Relations. Distribute "Evaluation Form" to the committee members. Explain that the simulation will begin with three-to-five minute presentations by the spokespersons for the option groups. Encourage the spokespersons to speak clearly and convincingly.

2. Remind students, including members of the option groups, that they should take notes on the presentations of each of the spokespersons to prepare for cross-examination on Day Eight.

Homework: Students should complete preparations for cross-examination questions.

DAY EIGHT

Advocating the five options: cross-examination

1. Invite members of the Senate committee to ask cross-examination questions. Make sure that each committee member has an opportunity to ask at least one question. The questions should be equally distributed among all five option groups. After the committee members have posed questions, invite members of the option groups to challenge the positions of other groups. During the cross-examination period, allow any option group member to respond. (As an alternative approach, permit cross-examination after each option is presented.)

2. Instruct members of the committee to fill out the first part of "Evaluation Form" in class. The second part of the worksheet should be completed as homework.

Homework: Students should read each of the five options, then fill out "Focusing Your Thoughts."

DAY NINE

Crafting student options

Objective: This one-day activity will guide students toward clarifying their own beliefs and values as they develop a coherent policy option.

1. Call on members of the Senate committee to share their evaluations of the option groups. Which arguments were most convincing? Which beliefs were most appealing? Poll the class regarding the six values listed in "Presenting Your Option." Which values do students consider most important?

2. Review the beliefs from "Focusing Your Thoughts," calling on students to indicate which beliefs they strongly support. Ask students to explain the relationship between beliefs and policy steps. For example, what policies would be based on a belief that Israel is our most trustworthy ally in the Middle East, or that the United States would benefit from closer relations with Arab countries?

3. Distribute "Crafting Your Option." Students should complete the worksheet in class. Call on students to use "Focusing Your Thoughts" as the basis for answering the first question of "Crafting Your Option." Note that students will use their option worksheets to write a letter on Day Ten.

DAY TEN

Expressing your views

Objective: This one-day exercise will compel students to present the case for their own option in a coherent and convincing manner.

1. Inform students that they will be writing a letter based on their own option to a member of Congress, President Clinton, or the editor of a local newspaper.

2. Suggest that students devote the first part of their letter to an analysis of recent events. For example, ask students to consider how their options address recent developments in the Arab-Israeli peace talks, economic problems at home, the end of the Cold War, and other vital issues. In the second part of their letter, students should present their option in the context of recent events while summarizing the answers to the first two questions of "Crafting Your Option."

Arabs and Jews in Palestine — 1920

The years following World War I brought substantial changes to the people living in the area of the Middle East known as Palestine. Since the 16th century, Palestine had been part of the Ottoman Turkish Empire. When the war ended in 1918, however, the Allies forced the defeated Ottoman Turks to give up control of much of their empire. The victorious British army stood as the most powerful force in Palestine.

Under the authority of the League of Nations, Great Britain was allowed to govern Palestine. In 1914, this area was home to approximately 550,000 Arabs and 85,000 Jews. Both communities traced their ancestral roots to the same land. Most of the Jews had arrived in recent decades from Europe. Their numbers were rapidly growing as thousands of European Jews dreamed of establishing a homeland in the ancient land of Israel. Meanwhile, the Arabs had lived in the area for many centuries. Before World War I, many Arab leaders had looked forward to breaking away from Turkish rule and governing themselves.

In 1920, it was hoped that both Arabs and Jews could live together peacefully in Palestine, with each community enjoying the right of self-government. Indeed, one of the most prominent Arab leaders, Emir Faisal, expressed his hopes in a letter *(right)* he wrote to Felix Frankfurter, a well-known spokesperson for American Jews, in 1919.

> *We will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home....We are working together for a reformed and revised Near East and our two movements complete one another. The Jewish movement is nationalist and not imperialist. Our movement is nationalist and not imperialist. And there is room...for us both. Indeed, I think that neither can be a real success without the other.*

To Think About: The years after World War I were an important historical juncture for relations between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. There was hope for peaceful cooperation, but at the same time the potential for serious conflict also existed. In the next few minutes, develop some proposals that would have laid the foundation for peaceful cooperation in 1920. Consider the following questions:

1. How should the government of Palestine be organized? Should representation be based on population? Should each community have control over some matters? Which issues should be decided in common?

2. What should be the policy on immigration? Should there be restrictions on the number of immigrants allowed to enter Palestine or should the borders be open?

3. Should the construction of new settlements be controlled? Should certain areas be reserved either for Arabs or Jews, or should property be bought and sold without any restrictions?

Center for Foreign Policy Development

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Name: _____

Study Guide — Part I

1. How did Palestinian and Jewish attitudes toward the British change during the 1930s and 1940s?

2. Why did the 1947 UN plan to divide Palestine fail to keep the peace between Jews and Palestinians?

3. How did changes in the Middle East during the 1950s prompt the United States to play a greater role in the region?

4. Give three reasons why the 1967 war is considered a turning point in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

5. How did the idea of "land for peace" result from the 1967 war?

6. How did the 1973 war set the stage for peace between Israel and Egypt?

7. How did Israel's invasion of Lebanon lead to unexpected consequences for both Israel and the United States?

Center for Foreign Policy Development *Permission granted for duplication*

Name: _____

Mapping the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Instructions: Refer to Part I of your text, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict from 1920 to 1985*, and the maps on page 9 to help you answer the following questions.

1. The country east of the Jordan River is today known as _____.

2. According to the British partition plan of 1937, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv would have been under _____ control.

3. According to the United Nations partition plan of 1947, Jerusalem would have been under _____ _____ supervision.

4. After the 1948 war, the West Bank became part of _____ .

5. Jerusalem remained divided between Israel and Jordan from 1948 until _____ .

6. In 1956, Great Britain, France, and Israel launched a military campaign to take control of the Suez Canal away from _____.

7. As a result of the 1967 war, Israel captured land from _____, _____, and _____.

8. Syrian land captured by Israel during the 1967 war is known as the _____ _____.

9. When the *intifada* began in 1987, more than 1.5 million _____ were living under Israeli military rule in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

10. In the 1973 war, _____ and _____ attacked Israel to regain territories taken in the 1967 war.

11. During the first stage of the 1973 war, Arab troops succeeded in crossing the _____ Canal and breaking through Israeli defenses.

12. As a result of the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, Israel returned the _____ _____ to Egypt.

13. Israel invaded _____ in 1982 to stop PLO attacks.

14. In 1984, 241 U.S. marines were killed while stationed in the city of _____.

15. In 1985, Israel set up what they considered a six to ten mile _____ _____ in southern Lebanon.

Name: _____

Study Guide — Part II

Instructions: Answer the following questions from the perspective of the participants in the Arab-Israeli peace talks. Make your responses brief but persuasive.

1. What are the most important concerns of the **Israelis** involved in the peace talks?

2. What are the most important concerns of the **Palestinians** involved in the peace talks?

3. What are the most important concerns of the **Syrians** involved in the peace talks?

4. What are the most important concerns of the **Egyptians** involved in the peace talks?

5. What are the most important concerns of the **Lebanese** involved in the peace talks?

6. What are the most important concerns of the **Jordanians** involved in the peace talks?

Name: _____

Study Guide — Part III

1. Why did the United States develop close ties with Israel?

2. Why did events of the 1970s and 1980s leave many Americans with a negative impression of the Middle East?

3. Why has U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict changed in recent years?

4. How is U.S. policy in the Middle East tied to the issue of foreign aid?

5. In your opinion, are the current peace talks between Arabs and Israelis likely to succeed?

Center for Foreign Policy Development *Permission granted for duplication*

Presenting Your Option

Day One — Preparing Your Presentation

Your Assignment: Your group has been called upon to appear before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate. Your assignment is to persuade the committee members that your option should be the basis for U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. You will be judged on how well you present your option.

Developing Your Presentation: Your group should work to make the strongest possible case for your option. Therefore, you should focus on values that will allow you to bring out the most convincing points of your option. Below is a list of six values that many Americans consider important. Your group should select the three or four values that are most clearly addressed by your option and then build your presentation around them.

Democracy: Democratic values rest on the belief that government should serve the people and that everyone should be equal before the law.

Self-Determination: The principle of self-determination holds that a people has the right to control its political destiny. In the Middle East, both Arabs and Jews have based their claims on self-determination.

Stability: In a world threatened by nuclear weapons and mounting economic pressures, instability in the Middle East could spark an international crisis. A key factor behind the Middle East's long-standing instability has been the tension surrounding the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Security: Since World War II, the United States has developed important security interests in the Middle East, especially the guarantee of access to the oil of the region. U.S. military ties to the countries of the region are designed to protect U.S. security interests.

Help at Home: The United States is currently suffering from many problems here at home. The Arab-Israeli conflict means little in the daily lives of most people in the United States.

Human Rights: Many governments abuse the human rights of their citizens by unjustly imprisoning, torturing, and even murdering them. Respect for human rights is a fundamental part of democratic values.

Organizing Your Group: Each member of your group should have a specific role. Begin by deciding who the spokesperson for the group will be. The spokesperson is expected to make a three-to-five minute presentation on your option on Day Two of this activity. Other group members should be assigned specific values to analyze. Their ideas should then be woven into the presentation of your group spokesperson. Your group will also need someone to look for weaknesses in the positions of the other options. On Day Three, your group will have an opportunity to criticize the positions of the other groups.

Days Two and Three — Making Your Case

On Day Two, your spokesperson will present the case for your option to the Committee on Foreign Relations. Notes may be used, but the spokesperson should speak clearly and convincingly. During the presentations, you should try to identify the weak points of the competing options. On Day Three, you will have a chance to ask your questions. Also, be ready to defend your option against cross-examination questions from members of the Committee on Foreign Relations and other groups. Any member of your group may respond to these criticisms.

Charting U.S. Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate

Your Role

As a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate, you consider issues relating to our country's foreign policy. In the past few years, many of our long-standing assumptions about the world have changed. With these changes have come new efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. These hearings will introduce you to five distinct approaches to our country's policy toward this complex dispute.

Your Assignment

While the five option groups are organizing their presentations, you should prepare two questions regarding each of the options. Your teacher will collect these questions at the end of the exercise.

Your questions should be challenging and critical. For example, a good question for Option 1 might be:

> *If the United States adopts Options 1, how would our relations with important Arab allies, like Saudi Arabia, be affected?*

After all five option groups have completed their presentations, your teacher will call on you and your fellow committee members to ask questions. The "Evaluation Form" you receive is designed for you to record your impressions of the option groups. Part I should be filled out in class after the option groups make their presentations. Part II should be completed as homework. After this activity is concluded, you may be called upon to explain your evaluation of the option groups.

Name: _____

Evaluation Form

Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate

Part I

What was the most persuasive argument presented in favor of this option?	What was the most persuasive argument presented against this option?
Option 1	*Option 1*
Option 2	*Option 2*
Option 3	*Option 3*
Option 4	*Option 4*
Option 5	*Option 5*

Part II

Which group presented its option most effectively? Explain your answer.

Focusing Your Thoughts

Instructions: You have had an opportunity to consider five options on U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. Now it is your turn to look at each of the options from your own perspective. Try each one on for size. Think about how they address your own concerns and hopes. You will find that each has its own risks and tradeoffs, advantages and disadvantages.

Ranking the Options

Which of the options below do you prefer? Keep in mind that the beliefs you support most strongly should guide your choice. Rank the options, with "1" being the best option for the United States to follow.

___ **Option 1: Back Israeli Claims**

___ **Option 2: Support a Palestinian State**

___ **Option 3: Encourage Compromise**

___ **Option 4: Withdraw from the Region**

___ **Option 5: Pass the Baton to the UN**

Beliefs

Considering the statements below will help you answer the first question of "Crafting Your Option." Rate each of the statements according to your personal beliefs.

1 = Strongly Support
2 = Support
3 = Oppose
4 = Strongly Oppose
5 = Undecided

___ The United States needs to be deeply involved in the Middle East.

___ The United States benefits from close ties with Arab countries.

___ The United States should help the United Nations take the leading role in resolving international conflicts.

___ Recent events have reduced the need for U.S. involvement in the Middle East.

___ Israel is our most trustworthy ally in the Middle East.

___ Only the United States has the power to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

___ The greatest threats facing our country are found at home.

___ In conducting foreign policy, the United States should favor other democracies.

___ The Palestinians have a right to self-determination.

___ The United Nations is best equipped to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Creating Your Own Option

Your next assignment is to create an option that reflects your own beliefs and opinions. You may borrow heavily from one option, or you may combine ideas from two or more options. Or you may take a new approach altogether. There are, of course, no perfect solutions. And there is no right or wrong answer. Rather, you should strive to craft an option that is logical and persuasive. Be careful of contradictions. For example, we should not support Israel's annexation of the West Bank if our goal is to strengthen our ties with the Arab world. The "Crafting Your Option" worksheet will help you organize your ideas.

Name: _____

Crafting Your Option

1. Which beliefs do you most strongly support?

2. What policies should the United States carry out?

3. How do your policy suggestions put your beliefs into practice?

4. What are the two strongest arguments opposing your option?

   A.

   B.

5. What are the two strongest arguments supporting your option?

   A.

   B.

Five-Day Lesson Plan

Homework: The night before the unit begins, students should read the "Introduction" of the background readings (abridged version) to prepare for the Day One activity.

DAY ONE

Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict

Objective: This discussion activity will introduce some of the key issues underlying the Arab-Israeli conflict.

1. Announce that the class will go back in history to 1920 to examine the Arab-Israeli conflict. Distribute "Arabs and Jews in Palestine — 1920." After students read the handout, call on them to identify other parts of the world where two peoples have claimed the same land (e.g., native Americans and European settlers in the United States; French and Germans in Alsace-Lorraine; Africans and Afrikaners in South Africa; Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland; Serbs, Croats, and Muslims in Bosnia).

2. Divide the class into groups of four students. Allow the groups ten to fifteen minutes to draw up a compromise proposal that will accommodate both Arabs and Jews. Issues to be addressed are outlined in the handout under "To Think About."

3. Call on spokespersons from each group to present their compromise proposal to the class. Record the most coherent proposals on the chalkboard.

4. After the presentations have been completed, compare the proposals on the chalkboard. How do the proposals attempt to weigh the competing claims to Palestine? How did the rise of nationalism complicate the issue? Why was the period after World War I an important historical juncture for the development of the present Arab-Israeli conflict?

Homework: Students should read Part I and Part II of the background readings (abridged versions) and complete "Mapping the Arab-Israeli Conflict" and "Study Guide — Part II."

DAY TWO

Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective

Objective: This discussion activity will help students better understand the perspectives of the participants in the Arab-Israeli peace conference.

1. Ask students to identify international events in the past five years that explain why Israelis and Arabs agreed to take part in peace talks. How are the talks related to the collapse of the Soviet Union? The Persian Gulf War? The immigration of Jews from the former Soviet Union? The *intifada*?

2. Write on the chalkboard the names of the six groups (Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, Syrian, Egyptian, and Lebanese) that participated in the Arab-Israeli peace talks that began in October 1991. Call on students to summarize the viewpoint of each group participating in the peace talks. (Suggest that students refer to their answers to "Study Guide — Part II.") For example, the Palestinian viewpoint should include an explanation of the historical territorial claims of the Palestinians, the formation of Israel, and Israel's subsequent conflicts with neighboring Arab states, an assessment of the current status of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and a summary of the goals the Palestinians wish to achieve at the peace conference. Write the key points on the chalkboard.

3. After brainstorming to identify the viewpoints of each group, ask students to identify the major areas of disagreement between the Arabs and the Israelis. How do the positions of the Arab delegations differ from one another? Explain that, in fact, the Palestinians and Jordanians have been represented by a single delegation at the peace talks. What historical factors account for that arrangement? Which issues seem most difficult to resolve?

Homework: Students should read Part III of the background readings (abridged version) and complete "Study Guide — Part III."

DAY THREE

Advocating the five options: organization and preparation

Objective: This two-day simulation calls on students to advocate one of the five options. Students will come away with a deeper understanding of the range of policy options available to the United States while also exploring the relationship between basic values and foreign policy.

1. Inform students that they will participate in a simulation using the options and the background readings. Form five groups of three to four students. Assign an option to each group. The remainder of the class will serve as members of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate. (In smaller classes, other teachers or administrators may be invited to serve as members of the committee.)

2. Distribute "Presenting Your Option" to the five option groups and "Charting U.S. Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict" to the Senate committee. Inform students that each option group will be called upon on Day Four to present the case for its assigned option to the committee. Explain that option groups should follow the instructions in "Presenting Your Option." Note that the option groups should begin by assigning each member a role. (As an extra challenge, ask the groups to design a poster illustrating the best case for their option.) While the option groups are preparing for their presentation, members of the committee should develop cross-examination questions for Day Four (see "Charting U.S. Foreign Policy"). Remind committee members that they are expected to turn in their cross-examination questions at the end of the simulation.

Homework: Students should complete preparations for the simulation.

DAY FOUR

Advocating the five options: presentation

1. Organize the room so that the five option groups face a row of desks reserved for the Committee on Foreign Relations. Distribute "Evaluation Form" to the committee members. Explain that the simulation will begin with three-to-five minute presentations by the spokespersons for the option groups. Encourage the spokespersons to speak clearly and convincingly.

2. Invite members of the Senate committee to ask cross-examination questions. Make sure that each committee member has an opportunity to ask at least one question. The questions should be equally distributed among all five option groups. If time permits, encourage members of the option groups to challenge the positions of other groups. During the cross-examination period, allow any option group member to respond. (As an alternative approach, permit cross-examination after each option is presented.)

3. Instruct members of the committee to fill out the first part of "Evaluation Form" in class. The second part of the worksheet should be completed as homework.

Homework: Students should read each of the five options, then fill out "Focusing Your Thoughts."

DAY FIVE

Crafting student options

Objective: This activity will guide students toward clarifying their own beliefs and values as they develop a coherent policy option.

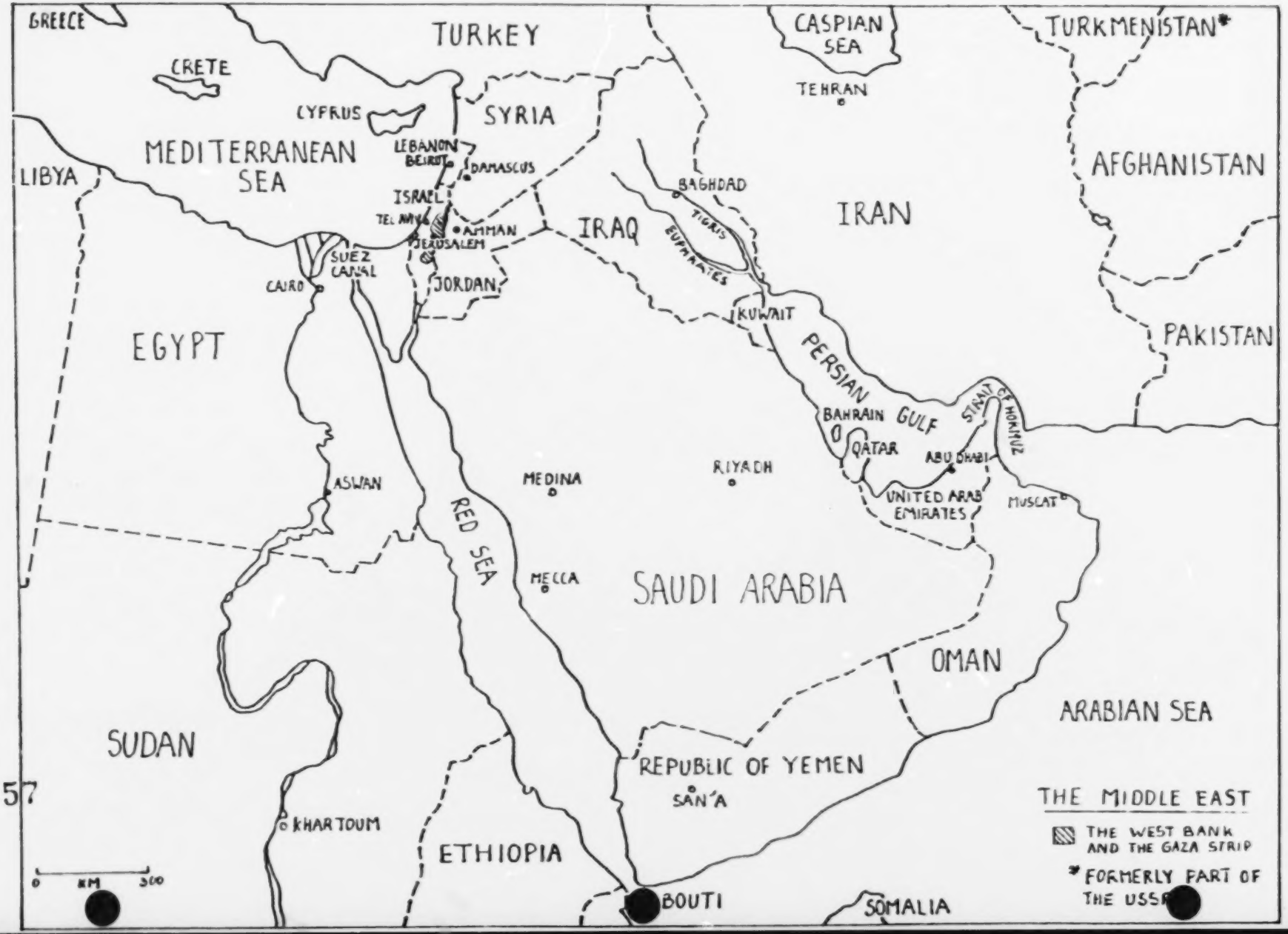
1. Call on members of the Senate committee to share their evaluations of the option groups. Which arguments were most convincing? Which beliefs were most appealing? Poll the class regarding the six values listed in "Presenting Your Option." Which values do students consider most important?

2. Review the beliefs from "Focusing Your Thoughts," calling on students to indicate which beliefs they strongly support. Ask students to explain the relationship between beliefs and policy steps. For example, what policies would be based on a belief that Israel is our most trustworthy ally in the Middle East, or that the United States would benefit from closer relations with Arab countries?

3. Distribute "Crafting Your Option." Students should complete the worksheet in class. Call on students to use "Focusing Your Thoughts" as the basis for answering the first question of "Crafting Your Option."

4. *Extra Challenge:* As homework, instruct students to write a letter based on their own option to a member of Congress, President Clinton, or the editor of a local newspaper. Suggest that students devote the first part of their letter to an analysis of recent events. For example, ask students to consider how their options address recent developments in the Arab-Israeli peace talks, economic problems at home, the end of the Cold War, and other vital issues. In the second part of their letter, students should present their option in the context of recent events while summarizing the answers to the first two questions of "Crafting Your Option."

Data Compiled from: Carter, Jimmy <u>The Blood of Abraham</u> Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1985, map 1.



Introduction

The Arab-Israeli conflict centers on a small piece of land in the Middle East no larger than the state of New Jersey. This area is referred to either by its Latin name of Palestine, or the ancient Hebrew name of *Eretz Israel*, or "land of Israel."* Both Arabs and Jews have religious ties to this land. However, the current conflict is not primarily a religious dispute. The conflict today is primarily a fight over who will control Palestine and who will call it home.

Three of the world's great religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – developed in the Middle East. Each of these religions is monotheistic, meaning that followers believe in only one god. Believers in all three religions claim descent from the Hebrew patriarch Abraham and all have special ties to Palestine.

Jewish ties to the land: According to Jewish sacred writings, Palestine was promised to the Jewish people by God in a covenant with Abraham and later with Moses. Jewish kings ruled parts of Palestine in ancient times. In 63 B.C., the Romans conquered the region. After a series of revolts, the Roman emperor expelled many Jews from the area. The Jews forced to live outside of Palestine came to be called Diaspora Jews, or "those in dispersion." In the course of nearly 2,000 years, Diaspora Jews often faced extreme persecution. Nevertheless, many Jews strengthened their commitment to Jewish tradition, and looked forward to the day when God would send a savior to lead them back to Palestine and Jerusalem, their holiest city. Their religion became so closely tied with their daily lives that a communal identity has survived to the present.

Christian ties to the land: Palestine is the "Holy Land" to the world's Christians because it is the birthplace of Jesus, a Jew, and the setting for the story of his life and lessons as recounted in the New Testament of the Bible. Many Arabs today are Christians and trace their faith to the early followers of Christ.

Muslim ties to the land: Muslims believe that God revealed his truths through a series of prophets: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus, and finally Muhammad, who is the last of the prophets. For Muslims, therefore, some of the scriptural heritage of the Jews and Christians is also theirs. However, Muslims are guided by their own holy text, the Koran. Muslims consider Jerusalem their third holiest city and, therefore, an important pilgrimage site.

Although religion carries great weight in the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli conflict is a struggle over land. For Palestinian Arabs, both Christians and Muslims, ties to the land are based on the fact that for centuries Palestine has been their only home. For Jews, the compelling interest has been to establish a homeland safe from persecution, in the land of their ancestors. The rise of nationalism in the 19th and 20th centuries marked the beginning of the present dispute.

Until about a hundred years ago, most of the world was governed by multinational empires. Empires ruled over people of many "nations," or peoples of common descent, religion, language and culture. The Ottoman Turkish Empire, for example, controlled much of the Middle East, including Palestine. In the 19th century, modern nationalism arose in Europe and spread elsewhere. Nationalists believed that each nation should strive to create a national state of its own.

At the turn of the century, neither Jews nor Palestinian Arabs had a state of their own. Jews in Europe at the time were facing a new wave of persecution. The rise of nationalism inspired many of them to consider the possibility of forming a Jewish state. In order to achieve this, Theodore Herzl, a European Jew, founded the World Zionist Organization in 1897. Arab nationalism also began to emerge at the end of the 19th century.

The nationalist movements of Arabs and Jews met head-to-head in Palestine. By the early 1900s, Zionists had focused on Palestine in their efforts to establish a Jewish state. In 1914, there were 85,000 Jews in the area, most of them recent immigrants from Europe. Meanwhile, nationalism was growing stronger among the 550,000 Palestinian Arabs.

World War I and British interests in Palestine further complicated the situation. At war with the Ottoman Turks, the British promised the Arabs independence if they revolted against the Turks. At the same time, Britain promised Zionists that a national home for the Jews would be created in Palestine. After the war, the League of Nations granted Britain administrative control over Palestine and other areas of the Middle East. Within the territory of Palestine, both Jews and Arabs expected the British to keep their word.

*This unit will use the name Palestine, the name most historians use, when referring to the area before 1948.

Part I: The Arab-Israeli Conflict from 1920 to 1985

By 1920, there were already several changes under way in the region that had dimmed the possibility of peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews in Palestine.

According to the promises they had made during World War I, the British were to promote the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" without infringing on the rights of the local Arab population. Zionists and Arab nationalists interpreted this differently. The Zionists expected the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, and pressed the British to allow more Jews to immigrate. Arab nationalists, on the other hand, believed that they would be granted independence and wanted restrictions on Jewish immigration in order to protect their majority.

When Adolf Hitler took power in Germany in 1933, the immigration rate of Jews to Palestine shot up. The Arab leadership in Palestine did not believe that the British were doing enough to slow down Jewish immigration. In 1936, Arabs launched a general strike to protest British policy. They also boycotted Jewish businesses and began attacks against Jews and Jewish settlements, as well as British forces. This strike was the beginning of three years of strife that came to be known as the Arab Revolt.

The Arab Revolt convinced the British that Palestine should be partitioned into Jewish and Arab zones (see map 1). The Arabs, however, rejected the British partition plan of 1937 and continued their uprising until 1939. World War II led to more changes in the British position. At first, the British tried to win Arab support by restricting Jewish immigration. By 1945, however, evidence that 6 million Jews had been murdered by the Nazis prompted an outpouring of international sympathy for the Jews. Many of the Jews who survived the Nazi death camps emigrated to Palestine after the war, swelling the Jewish population to 600,000 and sparking Zionist opposition to British rule. The Zionists objected to restrictions on Jewish immigration and demanded that the British leave Palestine. The Arab population at this time was approximately 1,256,000.

Facing resentment from both Arabs and Jews, the British turned responsibility for Palestine over to the newly formed United Nations (UN) in May 1948. Like the British, the UN proposed a partition plan for Palestine. Although Zionists accepted the 1947 UN plan, Arabs did not (see map 2). Violence erupted even before the exit of the British in May 1948. Seventy percent of the Arab population (more than half a million people) fled the Jewish zone, many fearing attack from Zionist forces.

When the British left Palestine, the Zionists declared their zone the independent state of Israel and were granted diplomatic recognition by the United States and the Soviet Union. The Arab states, however, refused to recognize Israel. On the contrary, forces from Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq invaded the new state.

The 1948 war ended after a few months with a UN-negotiated cease-fire. Israeli forces had not only held off the Arab attack, but had advanced into the Arab zone. No peace treaty was signed by Israel and its Arab neighbors. Instead, the 1948 cease-fire lines came to serve as the de facto boundaries of the region. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs were left as refugees. The western bank of the Jordan River (present-day West Bank) fell under the control of Jordan, while the Gaza Strip was attached to Egypt (see map 3). Jerusalem was divided in two. Although the creation of Israel marked the realization of the Zionist dream, it was at the expense of Palestinians who lost their homeland. With this loss, the stage for future conflict between Arabs and Jews was set.

The 1950s brought a major shift in U.S. policy toward the Middle East. Containing communism emerged as the top U.S. policy priority in light of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. Americans were particularly concerned that the Soviets would extend their influence to oil-rich countries of the Middle East. After 1957, the United States supported countries that pledged to join in the struggle against Soviet communism. Israel, Iran, and Saudi Arabia became important U.S. allies in the region. Meanwhile, the Soviets offered military aid to Egypt, Syria, and other Arab countries.

While the Cold War intensified, the influence of the European powers was in decline. In 1956, Britain and France reacted angrily when Egyptian leader Gamal Abd al-Nasser declared that the Suez Canal was Egyptian property. With Israel's help, the British

and French carried out a military operation to retake the canal and restore British control. The United States and the Soviet Union, however, condemned the attack and pressured the three armies to withdraw from Egypt.

In 1967, Egyptian-Israeli tensions sparked a broader war. Nasser demanded that a UN peacekeeping force serving as a buffer between Egypt and Israel be removed from the Sinai Peninsula, and he cut off the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping. Feeling threatened by Egypt and other Arab countries, the Israelis launched a surprise attack and crippled the air forces of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Within six days, Israeli forces captured the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights, as well as East Jerusalem (see map 4). The West Bank and Gaza Strip became known as the occupied territories, and Palestinians living there came under Israeli military rule — a state of affairs that continues today.

After the 1967 Six-Day War, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 242, which called on the Arabs to stop all threats and acts of force against Israel, and for the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict." This is the origin of the now familiar "land for peace" formula. In addition to territorial changes, the 1967 war had other implications. U.S. leaders increased military aid to Israel after the war and supported Israel's decision to hold onto the captured territories until the Arab states made peace. The war also resulted in the emergence of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as an independent voice for the Palestinian cause. After 1967, Yasser Arafat took control of the PLO. During the 1970s, the PLO increasingly used guerrilla attacks to draw attention to the Palestinian cause.

The humiliating defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 war planted the seeds for the next round of fighting in the Middle East. In 1973, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel in an attempt to retake the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights. The effort ultimately failed, but the Arab armies initially broke through Israeli defenses and, in general, fought more effectively than in 1967. The 1973 war also gave diplomacy a fresh chance. After the war, Egypt's new leader, Anwar Sadat, pursued peace talks with the Israelis.

In 1977, Sadat took a dramatic step toward peace: he traveled to Jerusalem and addressed Israel's parliament. But Sadat's initiative in itself did not bring peace. Earlier that same year, Israel had elected a right-wing government, led by the Likud party of Menachem Begin. Begin had run on a platform of never trading land for peace. His government launched a controversial policy of building Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter stepped in to mediate between the Egyptians and the Israelis. He brought Sadat and Begin to the presidential retreat, Camp David, and helped craft a peace treaty. What became known as the Camp David accords called on Israel to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in exchange for a demilitarized border and official recognition from Egypt. Although the agreement represented the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab state, tensions remained high in the Middle East. As a result of the treaty, all but two Arab countries cut off relations with Egypt. Sadat himself was assassinated by Muslim fundamentalists in 1981. Moreover, Israel showed little interest in pursuing the second part of the Camp David accords, which pointed the way to greater Palestinian autonomy.

The continuing conflict over the Palestinian question led Israel to invade Lebanon in 1982. The invasion was aimed at the PLO's main political and military bases and succeeded in driving the 12,000 PLO fighters out of the country, but at a high cost in human life on both sides. The invasion also led to U.S. involvement in Lebanon. In accord with a multinational peacekeeping effort, U.S. marines were sent in 1982 to Beirut, the Lebanese capital. The United States, however, became caught up in the Lebanese civil war. Religious fundamentalists were responsible for a suicide car bomb attack in 1983 which killed 241 marines.

In Israel, the Lebanese invasion sharpened political divisions within the society. The lack of consensus showed up in the 1984 elections, when the right-wing Likud party and the more moderate Labor party ended up in a virtual tie. The following year, Israel withdrew its troops from almost all of Lebanon. A small force of Israeli troops, however, remained in Lebanese territory to control a six to ten mile "security zone" along Israel's northern border (see map 4).

Part II: A Crossroads in the Middle East?

In October 1991, delegations from Israel and its Arab neighbors sat down in Madrid to take part in the first of a series of historic peace talks. The peace talks have provided a forum to air the fundamental concerns of each participating delegation. For Americans, understanding the concerns that each delegation brings to the negotiating table is critical if we are to determine what our country's role should be.

Israel: Israel's primary concern has been security. By occupying the territories of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and later the security zone in southern Lebanon, Israel has created buffer zones between itself and its Arab neighbors. Today, however, Israelis are divided over whether security can best be achieved by trading land for peace or by incorporating the occupied territories into the state of Israel. Giving up the territories would mean sacrificing Israel's buffer, though many believe it could end the conflict with the Palestinians.

Palestinians: Palestinian attitudes have been shaped by 45 years of conflict with Israel. The 1948 war forced more than half a million Palestinians to leave their homes. Half a million more were displaced in the 1967 war. Many of these refugees still live in camps in the occupied territories and in neighboring Arab countries. Traditionally, they have supported the militant policies of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). In recent years, the PLO has concentrated its efforts on creating a Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Roughly one-third of the Palestinians currently living in the occupied territories live in refugee camps, while the rest live in their own homes. Since the 1967 war, Israel has gradually merged the occupied territories' economy and utilities into its own. Palestinians live under Israeli military rule and are subject to frequent human rights violations. The more than 1.5 million Palestinians now in the occupied territories want independence from Israel. They are particularly concerned about the construction of new Jewish settlements near their homes, as this could prevent the creation of their own state.

Elsewhere in the Arab world: Many Arab states face threats to their survival. Several countries, such as Jordan, Egypt, and Syria, are burdened by poverty and instability. To avoid chaos, these states often turn to other nations for assistance. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the defeat of Iraq in the Persian Gulf War, many leaders in the Middle East have shifted their foreign policy.

Syria was a key Soviet ally in the Middle East for decades and maintained a hard-line policy against negotiations with Israel. During the Persian Gulf War, however, Syria joined with the United States in the alliance against Iraq. Syria's participation in the Arab-Israeli peace talks also marked a major shift in Syrian policy. Syrian President Hafez al-Assad hopes that the peace talks will help Syria regain the Golan Heights, strengthen its dominating position in Lebanon, and obtain economic aid from the United States.

Egypt has enjoyed close relations with the United States, particularly since the Camp David accords in 1978. Egypt's foreign policy, however, left it isolated within the Arab world until recently. Egypt now wants to restore its position of leadership in the Arab world. At the same time, Egypt remains economically weak and politically unstable. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak needs to safeguard the more than $2 billion in aid his country receives annually from the United States.

Lebanon has been devastated by a civil war that began in 1975 and continued into the 1990s. Beirut, Lebanon's capital, was largely ruined, and its name is associated with terrorism and hostage taking. Recently, the Lebanese government signed an agreement with Syria that allowed Lebanon to govern itself, although management of the country's foreign policy was largely relinquished to Syria. More than 30,000 Syrian troops are stationed in Lebanon, while Israeli forces remain based in southern Lebanon. The Lebanese want to rebuild their country without the presence of these troops.

Jordan has been in an unofficial state of peace with Israel since the early 1970s. Jordan, however, still plays a key part in the Arab-Israeli conflict More than two-thirds of the country's population is Palestinian. Jordan's King Hussein, who is not a Palestinian, is eager for peace in the region. With Israel to its west and Iraq to its east, the king recognizes that Jordan is in a precarious position. The 1948 and 1967 wars, as well as the Persian Gulf War, have left Jordan struggling to absorb hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees. King Hussein fears that further turmoil in the region could bring another wave of refugees into Jordan and undermine the stability of his government.

Part III: U.S. Thinking and the Politics of Peace

For decades, U.S. thinking about the Middle East was dominated by the Cold War against the Soviet Union. The cooperation of Israel's intelligence network made Israel a key strategic asset in the struggle against communism. At the same time, U.S.-Israeli ties were strengthened by American respect for Israel's western-style political system and a sense of moral obligation to help the Jews after the Nazi Holocaust.

The Cold War also led the United States to maintain close relations with Saudi Arabia, Iran, and later Egypt to counter Soviet influence. The United States, however, remained consistently opposed to developing ties with Israel's neighbors if they openly threatened Israel's security. Americans were especially suspicious of the Arab states that were in the Soviet camp. Many Americans held the Soviets and Arabs responsible for the escalation in terrorism that took place during the 1970s and 1980s. The most dramatic incidents – including the attack on the U.S. marine barracks in Beirut in 1983 and the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988 – left a deep impression on the American public. In addition, U.S. concern over oil supplies has colored American perceptions of the Arab world. In 1973, Arab states imposed an embargo against the United States in retaliation for U.S. arms shipments to Israel during the 1973 war. As a result, oil prices quadrupled.

The end of the Cold War, however, has been primarily responsible for a shift in U.S. policy toward the Middle East over the past few years. Leaders in both the United States and the Arab world have been compelled to re-evaluate their foreign policy priorities since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the image of the Palestinians in the United States underwent a significant change as a result of the *intifada*. Beginning in 1987, Palestinian protesters began to oppose the presence of Israeli soldiers on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, fighting only with rocks and sticks. The Israeli response was harsh. Palestinians were jailed without trial and their homes destroyed.

The Persian Gulf War raised additional questions about the U.S. role in Middle East. The war created the first U.S.-Arab coalition. Major Arab states like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and even Syria, joined the coalition against Iraq. The Persian Gulf War marked the first time that the Arab states were strategically more important than Israel was to the United States.

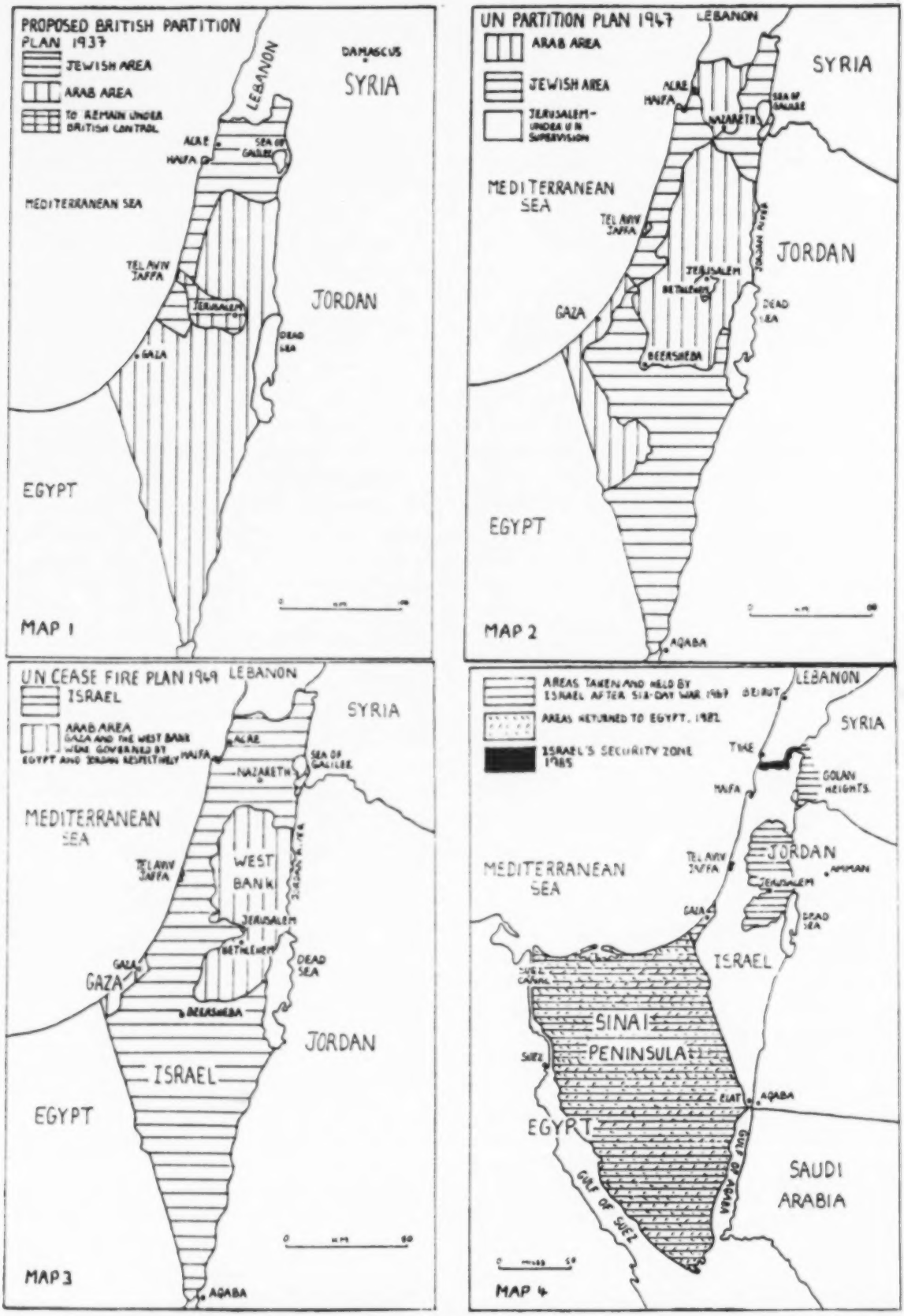
Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the Persian Gulf War committed the United States to the peace process in the Middle East. President Bush promised that, after defeating Iraq, the United States would turn its attention to achieving lasting peace in the region. Bush intended to use the long-standing ties between Israel and the United States, in addition to the newly improved relations with the Arab world, to make the Middle East a building block of the "new world order" that he hoped would emerge as a result of the Persian Gulf War.

The continuation of the Middle East peace talks means that the administration of President Bill Clinton and the American public will have some difficult decisions to make. Among the most important is the issue of the U.S. relationship with Israel.

In recent years, the United States and Israel have had some highly publicized disagreements. For example, the United States discovered that a U.S. citizen, Jonathan Pollard, was spying on the United States for Israel. More serious was the dispute between President Bush and Prime Minister Shamir over the construction of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. The controversy over Israel's settlement policy – particularly Bush's refusal to approve a $10 billion loan guarantee for new construction in Israel – nearly derailed the peace talks. The election of Yitzhak Rabin in 1992 helped to heal the rift in U.S.-Israeli relations and to keep the peace process alive.

U.S. leaders likewise face new questions regarding their relations with the Arab world. The biggest decisions will revolve around two key U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf War, Egypt and Syria.

Egypt and the United States have had good relations since the Camp David accords were signed. After the Persian Gulf War, the United States wrote off almost $7 billion in debt that Egypt owed the United States while continuing to provide more than $2 billion annually in foreign aid. In addition, the United States seems to be entering a new relationship with Syria, which may include providing economic aid to the Syrian government. There is still concern, however, about Syrian support for terrorism, human rights abuses, arms proliferation, and the possible use of U.S. aid to buy missiles from China.



Data compiled from: Smith, Charles. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988; Bickerton, I. and Pearson, M. *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1986; *Carta's Historical Map of Israel*. Jerusalem, 1977.

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